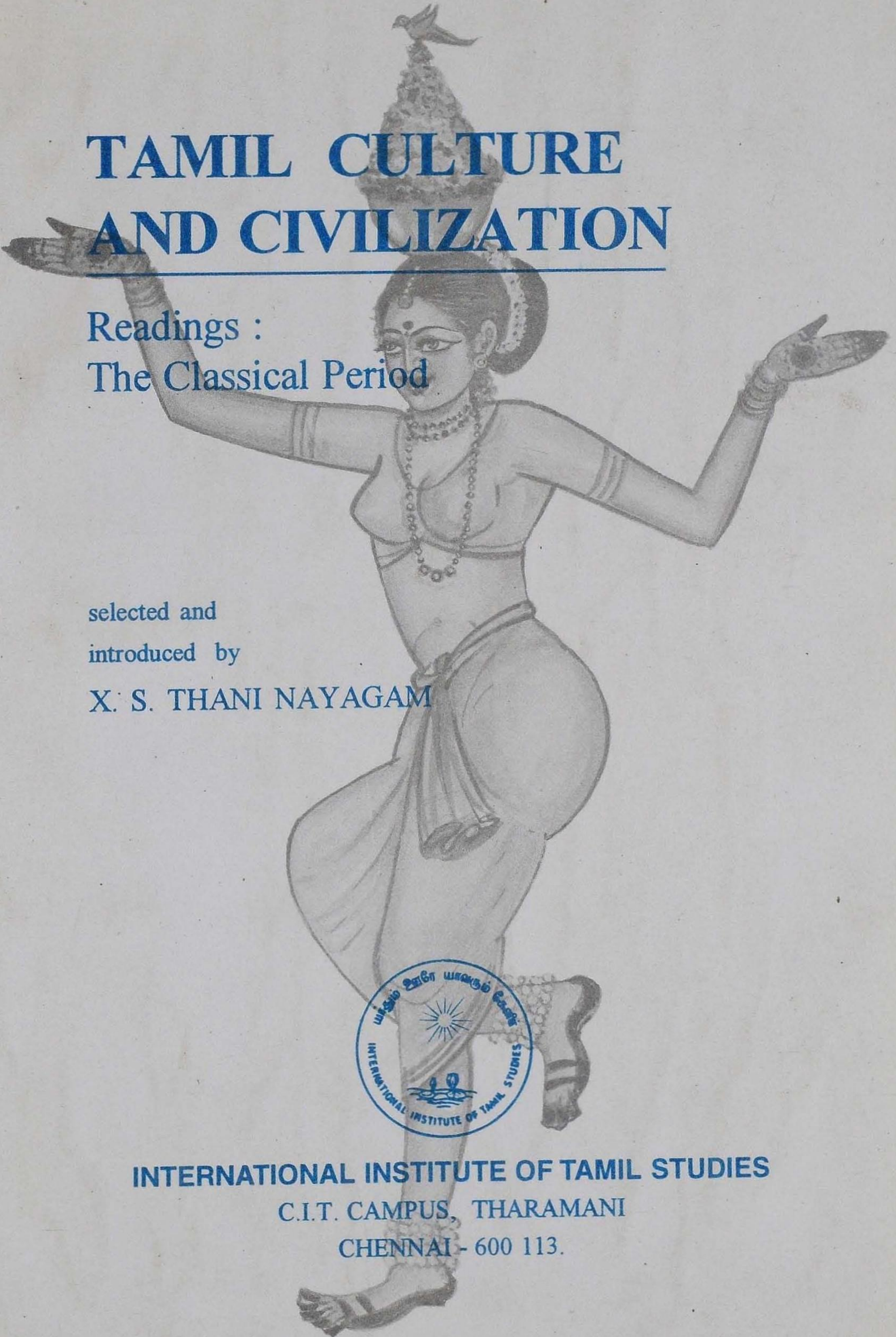
TAMIL CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

Readings : The Classical Period



selected and
introduced by

X. S. THANI NAYAGAM

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES
C.I.T. CAMPUS, THARAMANI
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Foreward

Xavier S. Thani Nayagam an eminent Professor of Tamil took steps to propagate the greatness of Tamil all over the world. He was one of the founders of the Tamil World Conference. He has widely travelled. He was one of the founder Secretaries of this Institute also.

We are extremely happy to reprint his work Tamil culture and Civilization published earlier in 1970. This book contains articles related to Tamil culture and civilization. This book is concerned with various articles related to Tamil culture such as language and literature, social life of the Tamils etc.

We wish to record our deep sense of gratitude to DR. M. TAMILKUDIMAGAN, Hon'ble Minister for Tamil Official Language and Culture and Thiru. V. PALANICHAMY, I.A.S. Secretary for Tamil Culture and Development for their constant encouragement in developing this Institute.

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Diacritical marks, wherever possible, spelling, punctuation and manner of entering footnotes are identical with those found in the printed original works. Books published after 1967 *have not been studied for the purpose of selecting Readings.*

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Preface

This volume of Readings on Tamil Culture and Civilization arose out of the reading prescribed to undergraduates enrolled for the course in Tamil Culture and Civilization which I gave at the University of Malaya. The preparation of this volume on the classical period proved to be an interesting voyage of discovery.

The selections have been made so as to provide, not a text-book, but a background reading which will stimulate further reading in fields in which the student may be interested. Some of the selections represent the limitations of research at the period in which they were written, and some are controversial, but the writers, all of them, are able to pick out the main trends of the Tamil story during its ancient period. Not all books by scholars provide an unbroken or even narrative or argument so as to attract the student who is bored by the repeated reading of a textbook. These selections have been made so as to provide general introductions to various divisions of the subject, but without any intention of offering an exhaustive work of reference.

peninsular part of India, known as the Dekhan, i.e. the south, is a solid and stable block of land, largely composed, according to the geologists, of the most ancient rocks of the earth which wind and water have carved out into the mountain ranges on the east and the west, constituting the eastern and the western Ghats; and into plateaus, valleys, and plains.

Ever since the Cambrian period, the dawn of geological history, the peninsular part of India, the Dekhan, has been dry land: "a continental segment of the earth's circumference which since that epoch has never been submerged beneath the sea except locally and temporarily". In contrast to this, the extra-peninsular or northern India has been a region which had been underneath the sea for the greater part of its history. It was a comparatively later disturbance of the earth that submerged the sea under land, created the plains of northern India, and threw up the large mountain barriers of the Himalayas, thus giving India its distinct and distinguishing shape, outline, and features. The south, therefore, is the more ancient land of India.

It also contains the most ancient peoples of India. For a reason later to appear, they have not, like most of the peoples of India, left any documentary traces of their life and career. But from the evidence laid bare by the sciences of archaeology, ethnology, and language, we may know who and what manner of people these were. In the mountain ranges of the Vindhyas, the northern boundary of the Dekhan; on the high places of the western Ghats like the Nilgiris; or on the elevation of the eastern Ghats like the Amarakantaka, can still be found groups of peoples who evidently had taken refuge from the inconvenient attentions of later but more powerful settlers in India. These are known compendiously in Indian history as the Dravidians.

From the race-memories of these peoples and from the similarity between them and the inhabitants of India which the first foreign invaders of the country encountered, we are justified in thinking that these forest tribes of India are the descendants of the ancient Dravidians. Thus, from the fact that to this day the Rajput chiefs of Marwar on the day of their coronation get their foreheads marked by a *tilak* (spot) with the blood taken from the toe of a native of the Bhil tribe; that a Mina does a similar thing to the Rama of Jaipur; that in the State of Keonghar in Orissa the crowning ceremony of the ruling chief has to be performed by Bheriyas; that at a festival of Siva at Tiruvarur in the Tanjore District of the Madras Province, the headman of the Parayans (Pariah of modern times) is mounted on the elephant with the god and carries the *chouri* (ceremonial fan), we may conclude that the Bhils of Rajputana and central India, the Minas of central India, the Bheriyas of Orissa, and the

Pariahs of southern India are the descendants of the ancient rulers of southern India. Their physical resemblance to the tribes that were encountered by the first foreign invaders of India also bear out this conclusion. They were dark-skinned, flat-nosed, short, as described in the literature of those that conquered them.

That the Dravidians had attained a certain level of civilization and culture is proved indeed by the progress attained in their civilization and culture within later times, as instanced in the language and literature of the Tamils and in the splendid specimens of Dravidian architecture. Such a bright summer must have been preceded by a genial spring. This fact is equally plain, however, from the accounts left us by those that overpowered them. One source of such accounts is to be found in the Vedic hymns, especially the *Rig Veda.* These are full of references to the existence of the ancient Dravidians and prove their advancement in the arts of life. The "hundred castles" of Sambara, the magnificent cities of the Gandharvas, the "wealth of Anas," the riches of Vritras—all these tales betoken a civilization which the invaders coveted but could not claim for themselves. The writings of these ancient times attribute even bravery and superior architectural skill to the Asuras and the Nagas.

Nor were these ancient Dravidian peoples merely civilized and cultured. They were not lacking in the more manly military qualities. No people, not even the ancient Hebrews, prayed so fervently and frequently for the coveted success in battle as did the conquerors and settlers who eventually succeeded against them. The prayers that they addressed to Indra and Agni must have been wrung from hearts stricken with anxiety and minds depressed by the prospect of possible failure against a terrible foe. Across the ages, the Vedic hymns and the epics of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* which speak of the terrible Savaras still palpitate with the fear and terror of a people who had ventured from their homes and had counted on an easy settlement in fertile territory. In their despair the Vedic peoples invented even charms, spells, and sacrifices, such as are found in the later books of the Vedas, and pressed them into service to defend themselves. It was a people akin to their own tribes that formed the famous Dravidian kingdoms of the south whose course in historical times we shall soon traverse.

II. Early South India

The *Tolkaappiyam,* the earliest Tamil work available which most Tamil scholars ascribe to the pre-Christian era (*circa* 3 C. B.C.), provides

much information from which the cultural and social anthropologist may draw inferences concerning early Dravidian culture. RALPH LINTON, in his work *Tree of Culture,* published posthumously, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957, describes how Southern India was in a position to receive and transmit selectively cultural elements without outside pressure. The reading is from pages 487 to 488 and from pages 495 to 498.

IN SOUTHERN INDIA the record begins somewhat later. The oldest writings do not go back much before the beginning of the Christian era. However, this region was in frequent contact with other ancient civilizations, and there are numerous references to it in Greek literature from the first century on. There are also various Chinese references, less readily available to the Western scholar. Protected by sea, Southern India was not invaded in force until after the Muslim conquest of North India in the 9th century A.D. However, from at least the 7th or 8th century B.C. traders had come to the Southern Indian ports from the west. By the 2nd or 3rd century B.C. the trade with both East and West was flourishing, and Southern Indian ships were sailing to Arabia, the East African coast, Indonesia, and Southern China. Western contacts reached a peak around the beginning of the Christian era. The Romans had an insatiable appetite for Indian gems and spices, particularly pepper, and, since they had few products which the Indians would take in exchange, these imports were paid for in gold. Roman gold coins were regularly used as currency in much of Southern India; Roman and Greek soldiers served Southern Indian kings as mercenaries; and two Roman colonies were actually established in Southern India, with a temple to Augustus at one of them. Other foreigners to settle in Southern India included Jews and Syrian Christians who arrived in the 1st century A.D., Persian Christians who came in the 4th; and Arabs, whose descendants still form an important element in the population of Malabar. There was also a considerable trade with China, which was still going on briskly in the time of Marco Polo.

By the dawn of their respective histories the three Indian regions had numerous cultural features in common, but there were also well-marked local differences. Northern and Southern India were sharply divided by language. The Indo-European-speaking peoples of the North had inherited more of the Aryan tradition. The Dravidian-speaking peoples of the South had retained numerous practices which were certainly non-Aryan. There were also well-marked differences within Northern India between the East and West. The West was open to raids. It formed the gateway by which new tribes had infiltrated the peninsula since before the dawn of history. Northeastern

India, the Ganges Valley region, was much less accessible to invasion, and its climate and natural resources enforced a greater degree of cultural continuity. Invaders who entered its lush tropical environment from the North or West found it necessary to adopt local ways of life in order to survive. Southern India was in a position to receive and transmit cultural elements without outside pressure. It seems to have been much more important as a donor than as a borrower, sending out missionaries and adventurers who carried Indian civilzation into Indonesia and the adjoining mainland. What it borrowed from foreign sources it took selectively and shaped to its own patterns....

We have already mentioned that the South Indian record does not go back much before the beginning of the Christian era, and that for even that period the information is far from adequate. Quite as in the North, the material culture and patterns of village life seem to have acquired very much their modern forms by the dawn of history. The economy was predominantly agricultural, but with all branches of technology well developed. All the Southeast Asiatic crops were raised, but the most important crop was irrigated rice. The plow, drawn by water buffalo, was used in preparing the rice paddies. Since this animal was also milked, in sharp contrast to the Southeast Asiatic pattern of animal usage, it seems probable that its utilization was modelled upon that of cattle in regions further north. The technology was equal, if not superior, to that of Northern India in the same period. Important buildings were of wood and were large and firmly constructed. Metal working was highly developed and steel was already being manufactured and exported. The aesthetic urge found expression in ivory and wood carving, weaving, and metal work. To judge from the artistic productions in the region in the somewhat later period of Buddhist dominance, the art was naturalistic and characterized by unusual vigour and motion.

The social organization and religion of the South are even more difficult to reconstruct. The best contemporary source is the *Tolkappiyam,* a Tamil work attributed to about the beginning of the Christian era. Although this is primarily a study of grammar, it includes dissertations on many other subjects. For purposes of cultural reconstruction it has the added advantage that Tamil seems to have been the most purely Dravidian of the languages spoken in South India and by far the most widespread at this period. The information which the work contains may therefore apply to much of Southern India.

According to this treatise, the Tamil-speaking people were originally divided into four groupings: the people of the mountain, of the forest, of the plain, and of the seacoast. Each division had its chief, and each carried on specialized activities based on the resources which

its natural environment provided. Each division was composed of numerous groups, who had different occupations and no doubt exchanged their products for those of other groups or divisions. Thus the people of the coast were divided into fishermen, pearl fishers, boatmen, makers of boats, salt makers, workers in shell, and merchants engaged in foreign trade. The early sources do not indicate whether these subdivisions were hereditary, but, in view of the situation existing in most cultures which shared the Southeast Asiatic co-tradition, it would seem highly probable that they were.

Modern ethnological studies in Southern India reinforce this conclusion. A similar division of activities still exists among the non-Hinduized tribes of the Nilgiri Hills. One of these tribes, the Toda, has become, largelv by accident, the Indian group most frequently mentioned in ethnological literature. A plateau in the Nilgiri Hills is occupied by three tribes, the Toda, Kota, and Badaga. The Toda herd and milk buffalo and prepare the clarified butter which is an indispensable part, not only of the food supply of other tribes, but also of their ritual procedures. They carry on no other economic activities. The Kota are farmers, cultivating grain, while the Badaga are craftsmen, merchants and also musicians. The three tribes are completely interdependent economically and share the same territory amicably. At the same time they live in different villages, and each tribe is strictly endogamous. Each tribe also has its own distinctive patterns of costume, housing, social organization, and religion. There are various taboos governing behaviour between members of different tribes, particularly in cases where the exercise of tribal skills is involved. Thus it is forbidden to an outsider to enter a Toda dairy when churning is in process. Although the Toda are recognized by the other two tribes as the original proprietors of the district and are accorded additional respect for this reason, the system lacks the rigid stratification which characterized the Hindu caste system and the religious rites of each tribe are performed by tribal members

The social organization within the numerous tribes which existed in Southern India at the beginning of the historic period cannot be reconstructed. However, studies of the modern aboriginal Dravidian peoples suggest that it may have been of almost Melanesian complexity, with clans, moieties, and elaborate marriage regulations. The only fact which is clear is that most, if not all, of the Tamil-speaking groups were originally matrilineal and even in some cases matrilocal. The position of women was and has remained exceedingly high, with older women in particular exercising dominance in family affairs. Although the introduction of Hinduism brought with it Hindu sex mores, with insistence on virginitv at marriage and subsequent

female chastity, the evidence of the surviving aboriginal tribes and certain traditional practices strongly suggest that patterns of premarital sex experimentation usual in cultures of the Southeast Asian co-tradition were present in the earlier period. Polyandry was probably approved in some tribes, as among the Toda, but it is unlikely that it was a general practice, since this institution seems to be uniformly linked with a paucity of natural resources and control of population through female infanticide. That there was a lively interest in sex can be deduced from the fact that, of the eight classical Tamil anthologies which have survived, three contain 400 love poems each.

The early literature gives no descriptions of the functions of division chiefs, nor of the extent to which the divisions were politically organized. Kingdoms cutting across division lines were certainly present from very early times. The main functions of such kingdoms seem to have been to make war and collect taxes. The early history of Southern India is one of almost continuous warfare, and it is amazing that such a high level of culture could have been maintained. Apparently the wars were carried on by professional soldiers, and subjects changed hands with little interruption of their daily lives.

Megasthenes notes the importance of popular assemblies in the government of Southern India. In his time and in later times there was a strong democratic tradition in government. Although this would seem to be inconsistent with the long record of warlike dynasties, even kings hesitated to act without consulting the representatives of the people. At lower levels, social units of every size and sort were governed by elective assemblies operating through committees. Such bodies existed not only for villages and districts but also for trade guilds and religious groups. The pattern of village organization as recorded in the 10th century A.D., when it was already considered ancient, was especially interesting. The land was held by the village as a corporation, and its use, and indeed all aspects of village life, were controlled by an assembly. Members of the assembly were chosen by lot and served for one year. All persons with property rights in the village, including women, were eligible to serve if they were of good character and had some knowledge of Hindu law. Committees appointed from the council were in charge of the care of gardens, land usage, irrigation, land survey, village servants, justice, the collection and payment of taxes, temples, and charities.

It is impossible to reconstruct Southern Indian religion of the pre-Brahmanic period. It seems certain that there were numerous tribal deities, some of which were equated with natural phenomena, while,

others seem to have been deified ancestors or local heroes. There was certainly serpent worship, and some other animals may have been revered. There can be little doubt that the pre-Brahmanic religion was heavily concerned with phallic worship and fertility rites of various sorts. Magical practices seem to have been more important than in the North.

The northern empires of the pre-Islamic period were in general unable to extend their control over the Dravidian South. Only Asoka in the 3rd century B.C. conquered the Deccan, and his successors soon retreated northward. As a result, the Dravidians were under no compulsion to accept the culture of the Indo-European North, and what they took from it they took selectively. Their acceptance of Buddhism and later Hinduism was no doubt facilitated by the numerous non-Aryan features, presumably drawn from Northern Dravidian cultures, which had been incorporated into these religions. Northern tradition has it that the first Brahmans visited Southern India in about 800 B.C., and by the 2nd and 3rd century B.C. Brahman, Jain, and Buddhist missionaries were operating in the region in considerable numbers. The Dravidians seem to have welcomed all three, no doubt largely because of their interest in the magical powers which the new cults claimed, and the whole South, with the exception of a few backward hill tribes, accepted the Northern religions. The process of Northern cultural penetration was probably much like that which took place in Indonesia at a somewhat later date. We know that there Indian princes or Brahmans, reinforced by the prestige of their higher culture, established themselves among the native tribes and either allied themselves with ruling families by marriage or enjoyed highly lucrative positions as prime ministers or as intermediaries between the new converts and the Hindu gods. It is interesting to note that by the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. there were Brahman kings in Southern India. The acceptance of the Northern religions seems to have been enthusiastic. Their missionaries were showered with royal gifts, and some of the most striking monuments of the Buddhist period in India are in the South, where monumental stupas of the 2nd and 3rd centuries still survive.

III. *Pre-Aryan Civilization*

The culture and civilization similar to those of the Indus Valley appear to have extended over a wide area stretching down to Lothal, near Bombay, and eastwards to Patna. The suspicion is that they

extended even further into Central India and South India. But Mohenjo-daro and Harappā in Pakistan are at present the two ancient cities which contribute to our knowledge of pre-Aryan civilization. AMAURY DE RIENCOURT who has written of the *Soul of China* has also written of the *Soul of India.* The following reading is from his book the *Soul of India,* Jonathan Cape London, 1961.

LIKE CHINA, INDIA is an immense subcontinent in its own right, almost as isolated from the rest of the world by towering mountain ranges rising out of impenetrable jungles and soaring up to eternal snows—a huge wall, known in the past as Himavat, stretching like a bent bow from Baluchistan to the wooded valleys of upper Burma. Here was no mere mountain range like the others. The Himalayas must have seemed to the Indians of thousands of years ago like a colossal outburst of cosmic anger throwing up tiers of towering peaks on top of one another or, in another mood, what the great poet Kālidāsa called the "massed laughter" of the god Śiva.

A mental fog has concealed until very recently the remote history of this part of the world; even now, it is only partly dispelled. We are aware at least that about five thousand years ago a full-fledged Civilization was firmly settled in the area of modern Sind and the Punjab, in the broad plains and valleys of the lower Indus River—in those days a far more fertile region than today, with much heavier rainfalls and dense forests. Unlimited supplies of timber were available to the refined and sophisticated populations of what is known as the Harappā Civilization. This great Civilization was preceded by a Culture of which we know little, widely dispersed over scattered areas of Baluchistan's small valleys. In Quetta, Amri-Nal, Kulli and Zhob, to mention only the most important, the remains of small settlements have already been unearthed; in all likelihood, they were separate political entities linked together by a common cultural development, very much like Classical Greece. Baluchistan's hill country was not a favourable terrain for political centralization and uniformity, any more than Greece's was. And, as has always happened in recorded history, the succeeding Civilization was bound to shift its centre of gravity to a contiguous area—the broad plains of the Indus—where these Civilization characteristics could find a more favourable geopolitical environment.

Let us now listen to the voice of archaeology; let factual archaeological research present its evidence unhampered by preconceived ideas, and we shall see to what extent the whole evolution of the Harappā Civilization conforms to the usual historical pattern. First of all, before we leave the pre-Harappā Culture, we must remember that "the variety in styles and techniques among the products of

the Baluchistan communities . . . permits us to visualize the existence of little peasant states, each more or less self-contained, within a natural area such as the Zhob Valley, or those of the Kolwa and Maskai . . . there is no evidence of any uniform arbitrary standards accepted or imposed throughout the territory."[1]

But, as Civilization overcomes Culture, these very Amri settlements are succeeded by those of folk whose allegiance is not to a petty state but to an empire. Diversity is replaced by uniformity over an area incomparably vaster than anything we have yet seen in prehistoric India; a complete agreement in details of material culture is found over an area stretching from the Makran coast of Kathiawar, and northwards to the Himalayan foothills: a huge irregular triangle with the sides measuring 950 by 700 by 550 miles. From end to end of this territory, from some forty settlement-sites, come pottery vessels of identical mass-produced types; houses are built of baked bricks of standard dimensions; stamp seals are used engraved with similar scenes and a uniform script, as yet unread; a standard system of weights is recognizable. While some sites are villages, others are small towns, and 350 miles apart stand two cities, each covering at least a square mile of ground, twin capitals of an empire. To a British archaeologist the inevitable parallel is the Roman Empire.[2]

This gigantic empire, twice the size of Old Kingdom Egypt, seems to have had two enormous metropolises: Harappā in the north and Mohenjo-darō in the south.

Thus, in the third millennium B.C. we have in north-west India a huge Universal Empire encompassing large slices of modern Baluchistan, Sind, and the Punjab. All the evidence points to a high degree of standardization and organization, implying strong centralization with full control over production and distribution, and probably a highly efficient system of taxation. The twin capital cities were laid out to a common ground plan and were roughly contemporary, although a transfer of the seat of government from one to the other is a distinct possibility. Towns were no longer laid out for military defence as in the old pre-imperial days—undoubtedly because a universal Roman type of peace prevailed throughout the "civilized" world of those times. The extremely advanced stage of standardization indicates the existence of a universally accepted commercial

[1] Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, p. 132.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 133.

code and uniform technique of production controlling the sizes of bricks, the capacity of pots, and so on. Agricultural output was under municipal control, and huge granaries similar to those of the contemporary Egyptian Civilization dotted the landscape. For centuries street-frontage regulations were strictly observed

The amazing efficiency of the Harappā Civilization was linked to a depressing utilitarianism and a remarkable cultural stagnation. Its uniformity was expressed in time as well as in space. There were at least nine phases of rebuilding at Mohenjo-daro, and all indications are that there was no change in the people's way of life. The script, with its 270 characters, essentially hieroglyphic as in contemporary Egypt, remained identical throughout the entire period. This urban and literate Civilization, known to us only in its mature form, was undoubtedly the heir to the Culture whose scattered remnants are strewn over Sind and Baluchistan.

Who were the men dwelling in the Harappā Empire? We have evidence of two main racial strains: the first, and probably the dominant one socially, belonged to the long-headed "Mediterranean" type which spreads from Spain to India. The second belonged to the "Australoid" group with their thick lips and coarse noses, probably the original natives of the land. If we add some brachycephalic "Alpine" types and the Mongoloid hill people of the Himalayan foothills, we already have a complex ethnic situation where white, brown, dark and yellow races lived side by side within the compass of a great cosmopolitan Civilization. But the majority must have belonged to a stock very similar to the modern dark-skinned Dravidians of southern India.

The colossal size of the capital cities reminds one of Imperial Rome. The sheer size of the Citadel, the impressive Great Bath, the Collegiate Building, the Pillared Hall, all these great monuments indicate that Mohenjo-daro was a centre of religious and administrative life on a grand scale. The city itself, with its countless shops and residential districts, was laid out like a gridiron of large avenues cutting each other at right angles, dividing the city into large rectangular blocs. The large houses of the wealthy were provided with doormen, elaborate bathrooms, and rubbish chutes running through the outside walls into bins probably cleared by the municipal authorities. A complex drainage system under the streets was connected with the house drains. There seems to be no doubt that the general standards of health and sanitation were remarkably high. Large sections of the town were laid out for the workers; depressingly uniform rows of cottages lined narrow streets. Massive wooden mortars, large granaries, metalworkers' furnaces, everything suggests a high degree of semi-industrialization. In fact, archaeology

claims that "to the Harappā Civilization we must presumably attribute the first really organized industry in Western Asia".[3]

The arts and crafts were the typical products manufactured for the use of mercantile classes, essentially utilitarian, without real artistic value, the typical products of a Civilization as opposed to the aesthetic, spontaneous products of a living Culture in full growth. In the words of an archaeologist, they were on the "dead level of bourgeois mediocrity"; and he adds: "The dead hand of conservatism in design, rather than in technique, lies heavily on all the Harappā products. Complex technical processes were known, well understood, and admirably organized for production, but the output suffered from standardization and an almost puritanical utilitarianism".[4] It is highly probable that "steril would be a better adjective than "puritanical".

Little is known about the Harappā religion although archaeological research suggests the widespread cult of a Mother Goddess—undoubtedly the direct ancestor of the Grāma-Devatās who are still worshipped in countless Indian villages to this day and whose priests are outcastes, remnants of the pre-Aryan populations of India. Archaeological excavations have als d prototypes of the future god Śiva seated in the position of a *yogi*, as well as evidence of phallic worship. And, most important of all, the Harappā people *buried* their dead, the symbolic gesture of men concerned with *duration*, like the Chinese or the Pharaonic Egyptians—and in sharp contrast to the succeeding Aryans.

And so, for almost a thousand years, more or less from 2700 B.C. to 1700 B.C., this great Civilization flourished in relative peace. But like all Civilizations, it seems to have become completely sterile and ossified as time streamed by. Even technologically, it became backward. Although Harappā men were at the time the sole inventors and users of saws with undulating teeth, although they made ample use of copper and bronze, they did not know iron; and whereas from the third millennium onward Mesopotamians knew how to fashion tools with sockets for handles, Harappā ignored this technical revolution. Harappā, it seems, had not domesticated the horse. Inevitably, this great Civilization was at the mercy of barbarians who were technologically more advanced. When those barbarians appeared, some time in the first half of the second millennium B.C., on the northwest passes of Lak Phusi, the Bolan and the Gaj Valley, the great Civilization of Harappā collapsed for all time and faded

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 170.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 200.

from the memory of man until archaeology began to unearth its impressive remains in the twentieth century A.D.

VI. "1984"-B.C.

LEONARD COTTRELL, who has published in book form his many travel talks over the B.B.C., has in his book *Lost Cities* the following detailed description of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā. Both Amaury de Riencourt and Leonard Cottrell describe in detail the Indus Valley cities which have also been described by the famous archaeologists who originally uncovered the Indus sites and wrote about them. Sir John Marshall, and Sir Mortimer Wheeler, *Lost Cities,* Robert Hale Ltd., 63 Old Brompton Road, S. W. 7, England, 1957, also published by Pan Books. The reading is the entire chapter on the Indus Valley, pages 108 to 123.

THE VAST SUB-CONTINENT of India-Pakistan contains many once-great cities now in ruins, but the majority of these were built in historical times, far later than those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. In fact, until comparatively recently, nowhere on earth, save China, was there conclusive evidence of any ancient civilization of comparable age to those of Egypt and Sumeria.

But in India, as in ancient Greece, there were traditions. According to Hindu chronicles, the history of India goes back to some three thousand years before the beginning of the Christian era, but there is no archæological evidence to support this. We know, however, that the first invasion of India was that of the Aryans. They came from the northwest and lived for a time on the southern slopes of the Himalayas before they invaded the great Indo-Gangetic plain and drove back the earlier Dravidian population into the southern part of the sub-continent. Most of our knowledge of them is derived from the *Rig Veda,* a collection of Hindu hymns which established the antiquity of their origin. They were a civilized people with an established and highly complex religious tradition, and were acquainted with the various arts. They worshipped innumerable deities, who are still venerated today; there must be few people who are not vaguely familiar with some of them—the god Indra, the god Vishnu, the god Shiva and her consort Parvati, and others.

Yet until just over thirty years ago all this information was traditional, based on Hindu myths and legends. Hindu civilization was obviously extremely old, but how old? Whereas in Egypt and Mesopotamia there were cities, monuments and tombs, which, with

their contents, could be positively dated by archæological evidence, in India there was no city which could be proved to have existed before about 500 B.C. In fact, Sir John Marshall, writing in 1922 of the monuments of ancient India commented that:

"Before the rise of the Maurya Empire a well developed and flourishing civilization had existed in India for at least a thousand years; yet, of the structural monuments erected during those ages not one example survived save the Cyclopean walls of Rajagriha."

The Maurya Dynasty began in 321 B.C., and Rajagriha dates from the sixth century B.C.

And yet, a year before those words were published, one of Sir John's staff, Rai Bahadur Daya Sahni, had already made them out of date. For in 1921 he had made trial excavations in the ancient city-mound of Harappa, in the Punjab, where seal-stones with animal designs and a strange, undeciphered form of picture-writing had been found. These excavations quickly established that, beneath the mound of Harappa, were unmistakable evidences of an earlier city which had been occupied by a people who had lived during the *chalcolithic* period. Archæologists used this word to indicate an intermediate stage between the New Stone Age (neolithic) and the Bronze Age. In Asia Minor *chalcolithic* cultures begin roughly at about 2500 B.C., and in Mesopotamia somewhat earlier; but, of course, it did not follow that the Indus Valley peoples had reached a comparable state of civilization at the same time. Sir Mortimer Wheeler, in his book *The Indus Age*, writes :

'What that implied in terms of absolute chronology was still undetermined, but it was clear enough that an urban culture appreciably earlier than the Maurya Empire, or indeed than Rajagriha, had now been identified. And in 1922 another member of Sir John's staff, Mr. R. D. Banerji, was already finding similar remains beneath a Buddhist stupa which crowned the highest of a large group of mounds known as *Mohenjo-daro* (possibly='the hill of the dead') nearly 400 miles away the Larkarna district of Sind. Within a few weeks of publication it was abundantly clear that a new chapter would have to be added to the prehistory of India and to the record of civilization".[1]

Within the past thirty years, as Sir Mortimer's "new chapter" has begun to be written, it has been established that there existed, in

[1] Wheeler, Sir Mortimer: *The Indus Age*, Cambridge University Press, 1953.

this part of India, a prehistoric civilization almost as old as that of Sumeria. The frontiers of Indian preh have been pushed back more than two thousand years.

Before we describe the two principal cities ..ave been excavated, and the vast area they controlled, it is worth while to consider the most ancient sacred literature of India, the Vedic Hymns. There are about one thousand of them, and they are addressed to the greatest gods of the Hindu pantheon, extolling their deeds and entreating them to accept the sacrifice of their worshipper. The hymns are in Sanskrit, the literary language of ancient India, branch of the Indo-European family of languages from which our own is descended. Parts of the *Rig Veda* may refer to the time before the Aryan invaders entered India, though this cannot be proved, but may appear to belong to a time of strife and conflict, when the invaders from the north were moving into the land to which they have given their name, a time when they called upon their greatest god, Indra, to help them in battle. Indra was "the ruler of the bright firmament". Like Zeus in Greek mythology he stands at the head of heaven as king of gods, and in Vedic poetry he is represented as performing wonderful deeds for the benefit of good men, while possessing at the same time the attributes of a war-god.

In some of the hymns Indra is *puramdara*: "fort-destroyer". To assist his protégé, Divadasa, he destroys "ninety forts". These are evidently walled cities of some sort; the word *pur* occurs, meaning "rampart" or "stronghold"; some are of stone (*asmamayi*), others probably of mud-brick (*ama*—"raw", "unbaked"). He also destroys one hundred "ancient castles" and "rend forts as age consumes a garment".[2]

Until recently it was assumed that these citadels were mythical, or, as Macdonnell and Keith suggested, "were merely places of refuge against attack, ramparts of hardened earth with pallisades and a ditch". But, just as in the case of the Homeric stories of ancient Greece, which used to be regarded as mere myths, the events described in the *Rig Veda* appear to have an historical basis.

In fact it can now be proved that when the Aryans entered India they had to encounter not mere untutored barbarians but a highly civilized people who had occupied the Indus Valley for at least a thousand years before the invasion.

The evidence for this has been obtained mainly from the excavation of two "lost cities". One is Harappa, already mentioned, a small

[2] For these allusions to the *Rig Veda* I am indebted to Sir Mortimer Wheeler's book, *The Vedic Age.*

town in the Montgomery district of the Punjab. The other is Mohenjo-daro, more than three hundred and fifty miles to the south-west. Mohenjo-daro is on the Indus; Harappa is on one of its tributaries, the Ravi. Between and beyond these two large cities, each three miles in circumference, archaeologists have identified sixty smaller settlements on the Indus Plain and more in the hills to the west, all of which have yielded evidence of a common civilization, though uniformity was greatest among the valley settlements. The total area covers more than one thousand miles from Rupar, at the foot of the Simla hills, to Sutkagendor, which lies close to the coast of the Arabian sea. This area is much greater than that of either Ancient Egypt or Sumeria; in fact almost twice as large.

Anyone who has driven from Karachi across the Sind Desert will agree that this is not the most attractive area of the earth's surface. Where the Indus wanders slowly across the plain, it is bordered by a wide green band of vegetation, and here and there are areas which man has reclaimed from the desert by artificial irrigation; apart from these the eye has no rest from the monotonous, dun-coloured desert, on which only the tough desert scrub and small bushy trees are able to survive. Throughout the long summer it grills under an unrelenting sun; on windless days the heat-waves dance and eddy above the tamarisk trees; when there is a wind the blown dust stings the eyes. As the sun sucks from the earth the last vestiges of winter rain, a scum of salt rises to the surface, looking as one writer has expressed it, "like a satanic mockery of snow". Creaking bullock-carts move slowly along the dusty roads, linking the dusty villages from which, occasionally, the tall *stupa* of a Buddhist temple breaks the skyline. As in Babylonia, the modern traveller finds it hard to believe that such an apparently sterile land could have supported a numerous population.

As the traveller moves northward, following the great river, he sees, far away to his left, the hills of Baluchistan. Some three hundred miles from Karachi a tributary flows into the Indus. Following this for another hundred miles he reaches a point where another river, the Ravi, flows into it from the east, and fifty miles farther on, on the right bank, rises the extensive village of Harappa, overlaying part of a complex of mud-coloured mounds. It was here, in 1921, that Sahni dug into the mounds and discovered evidences of a civilization which had existed for at least a thousand years before the Aryans entered the Indus Valley; we call it *Harappan*, after the site at which it was first found.

Harappa was a difficult and somewhat unrewarding site to excavate; difficult because the modern village occupies part of the mound, unrewarding because it had been largely wrecked by brick

robbers who, in the nineteenth century, had extracted huge quantities of dried mud-brick for use as ballast on the Lahore-Multan railway. Nevertheless, from the remains which survived, the excavators were able to establish that the city had a circuit of not less than three miles, and that its main features were a strongly-walled citadel on the west and a "lower city" to the east and south-east. The citadel, a rough parallelogram 460 yards long by 215 yards wide, was surrounded by a huge defensive wall of mud-brick, 45 feet wide, with an external revetment of backed-brick 4 feet wide. Bastions projected at intervals to strengthen the defences and there were ramps and terraces approached by gates, and supervised from guard-rooms. The citadel stood on a brick platform, high above the plain, from which it was probably approached by flights of steps. The buildings which had stood within these defensive walls were too badly damaged to be identified.

When the archæologists began to examine the mounds north of the citadel they were luckier. Here, close to the old river-bed (the river is now six miles away) three important groups of buildings were uncovered.

> "Towards the south, close to the citadel, is a double range of barrack-like dwellings. Further north are remains of five rows of circular working-platforms; and beyond these is a double range of granaries on a revetted platform. The ensemble shows co-ordinated planning, and, although the methods of the excavators were not such as to yield stratigraphical evidence of the requisite intricacy, it may be supposed that the whole layout is of approximately one date." [3]

The two lines of barrack-like dwellings were incomplete, but sufficient survived to show that each dwelling consisted of two rooms, with floors partially paved with mud-brick, fronted and backed by narrow lanes, the whole being enclosed within a wall. "It is evident," writes Wheeler, "that the original scheme was both distinctive and uniform, and was in fact a piece of government planning. . . . It may here be added that on and about the site of these coolie-lines, but at higher levels, sixteen furnaces were found. . . . The precise function of these furnaces is doubtful, but a crucible used for melting bronze was found in the vicinity."

The seventeen circular brick "working-platforms" were evidently used for pounding grain. One had held a wooden mortar, and round the central hole where this had stood were fragments of straw or

[3] Wheler, Sir Mortimer: *The Indus Age*, Cambridge University Press.

husk. Burned wheat and husked barley were found in another. It seems clear that on these platforms, arranged in regimented rows, all overlooked by the frowning walls of the citadel, labourers had wielded long wooden pestles, pounding the grain in mortars. A similar system is used in Kashmir today, but the sinister significance of the Harappa platforms was the evidence they provided of supervised and regimented labour.

About a hundred yards to the north of these platforms was a system of granaries, each 50 feet by 20 feet, also arranged symmetrically in rows, with a passage between them. The floor of each granary was supported clear of the ground by low walls, to allow the circulation of air. There were small projecting air vents, and the total floor space of all the granaries was over 9,000 square feet.

Somewhat later, archæologists began to investigate the great mounds of Mohenjo-daro, nearly five hundred miles to the South-west in the Sind Province. Here there were few overlying modern buildings, save for a Buddhist *stupa* which rose above the highest mound.

When, after thousands of tons of earth had been removed, and the tangle of foundations, pavements and mighty walls stood naked to the sun, the least imaginative visitor was stirred to wonder. Throughout the world archæologists recognized the discovery as a new landmark in prehistoric research; a new road had opened into the remote past of mankind. For here was a great city almost, if not as old, as the Pyramids or Ur of the Chaldees. The Nile, the Tigris, and Euphrates could no longer be regarded as the only begetters of the earliest riverine cultures. The Indus, now, could take her place beside them.

It soon became clear that Mohenjo-daro was a product of the same civilization which had created Harappa. Like that city, it consisted of two main elements, a powerful walled citadel to the east and a lower city to the west. The citadel was built on a platform of mud-bricks and mud, resting on an artificial mound. There were remains of defensive bastions at the south-east corner; two of them apparently guarded a postern gate, but at a later stage in the city's development this gate had been blocked and replaced by a platform, which had collapsed. Among its debris the excavators found "about a hundred baked-clay missiles, each approximately six ounces in weight".

Within the citadel the diggers came upon a huge bath or tank, 39 feet long, 23 feet broad and sunk eight feet below the level of the courtyard, which was surrounded by a corridor separated from the courtyard by ranges of brick piers. Flights of steps led down into the bath, which had been rendered water-tight; the floor was of bricks set on edge with gypsum mortar between, and the walls were treated in the same way. The outlet from the bath led through

"a high and corbel-arched drain which wound down the western side of the citadel-mound". There were ranges of subsidiary rooms, one containing a well which supplied water for the bath, and there was a staircase leading up to the now-vanished upper storey or flat roof.

Other suites of rooms, each including eight small bathrooms, were found north of the Great Bath, carefully and solidly built. Their well-made brick floors were drained by runnels communicating with a drain, and every room had a small brick staircase which presumably led to an upper storey.

Even more remarkable than the Great Bath was a building lying to its west. It had first been detected by Mr. Ernest Mackay in the thirties; he had noted solid blocks of brick-work, each about five feet high, divided each from the other by narrow passages. Mackay thought that these might be the remains of a *hammam* or hot-air bath, but when the building was more or less completely cleared by Wheeler in 1950, its real purpose was revealed. It was the sub-structure of an enormous granary, which originally had been 150 feet long and 75 feet wide, built, like the rest of the city, of mud-brick. When fully revealed some of the walls were found standing to a height of more than 20 feet. The outer walls of the massive platform were sloped, giving the building a grim, fortress-like appearance, and at the northern end was a brick platform, the walls of which were similarly sloped, save at one point where they were vertical, "evidently to facilitate the hauling up of bales deposited underneath".

The criss-cross arrangement of supporting walls was probably intended to assist air-circulation, and there were vertical air-shafts let into the outer walls. The granary itself, of which only the platform remained, had been built of timber. In area it was approximately the same as the group of granaries found at Harappa.

North-east of the Great Bath was another large building, substantially built, with a large open court and a number of small barrack-like rooms, some of which are carefully paved with bricks, and have staircases. It has been suggested that this was a "collegiate" building for priests, but this has yet to be proved. The buildings which lie underneath the Buddhist *stupa* and monastery cannot be touched at present; there are those who believe that there may be found the temple of the deity or deities worshipped by the Harappans. The arrangement of the citadels of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro recall the theocratic administrations of ancient Sumeria; at Ur for instance, the priests of the moon-god administered cloth-factories, breweries, bakeries and blacksmiths, on behalf of the god, and, of course, the state. For the present this must remain pure

speculation, since the written inscriptions found on Harappan sites cannot yet be deciphered.

For the time being, therefore, the lives of the ancient Harappans remain shadowy for us; all we can now know of them is derived from such of their buildings as have survived, and the objects found in them. But quite a lot can be learned. For instance, we know that they understood town-planning. The "lower city" of Mohenjo-daro was laid out in a criss-cross pattern of streets which were evidently planned from the start. unlike those of Ur, in Sumeria, which seem to wander inconsequentially. There is, however, something depressing and a little sinister in this huddle of lanes and streets, all built of mud-brick and, as far as can be ascertained, unornamented. Few windows opened on those streets, though there may have been grilles for ventilation. Within, the chambers opened on to courtyards, and partitions were probably of matting, to assist in the circulation of air.

The most astonishing feature, which makes the Harappan cities almost unique in the pre classical world of the ancient East, is the elaborate system of drainage and sanitation. Bathrooms are very much in evidence; there are latrines with waste-channels leading to cess-pits, which were evidently regularly cleared by municipal workmen.

"The noteworthy and recurrent features," writes Wheeler, "are the insistence on water-supply, bathing and drainage, together with a substantial stairway to the upper floor. In some houses a built seat-latrine of Western type is included on the ground or first floor, with a sloping and sometimes stepped channel through the wall to a pottery receptable or brick drain in the street outside." And of the general layout of the Lower City he says, "The main streets are about 30 feet wide, and major *insulæ* or blocks are subdivided by lanes which are not infrequently doglegged, as though (like the side-streets of Avignon, for example) to break the impact of the prevailing winds."

Besides private dwelling there were larger buildings which may have been industrial or commercial premises, and one, with conical pots sunk in the floor to take large jars, may have been a restaurant. Religious buildings have not been definitely identified, though the archæologists discovered, in the Lower City, a complex of thick-walled building with a ceremonial approach leading to a central space which may have contained a sacred tree, or perhaps the statue of a deity. Near this building was found a piece of statuary representing a seated or possibly squatting man, bearded, with a shaven upper lip, and a fillet round his brow, which was sub-naturally low.

Like the other rare human figures found on Harappan sites, the face is prognathous and receding-chinned.

Up to date no examples of Harappan art have been found comparable in beauty and vitality to those of Babylonia or Egypt. A large number of terra-cotta and faience figure, is rarely represented, and when it is, the work is often crude and carelessly executed, as if human beings mattered very little. Among the numerous statuettes of animals are the elephant, rhinoceros, bison, monkey, turtle, sheep, dog, pig, and various unidentified birds. These give some idea of the variety of wild animals which thronged the Indus Valley in these remote times, and suggest that four thousand years ago the area enjoyed a moister climate encouraging a marshy or jungle type of vegetation. A considerable number of small clay statuettes representing a female figure have been found; probably a goddess. Sometimes she is represented with a large, wide-spreading head-dress and prominent breasts. Some of these figures have children at the breast; others have a pannier at each side, which, from the smoke stains sometimes found, were probably used for burning incense. She may have been the Harappan version of the "Mother Goddess" who was worshipped in many forms throughout the prehistoric world.

Some of the models are more skilfully made, such as tiny figurines made of faience (glazed paste) representing sheep, dogs, squirrels, and monkeys. Buttons, studs, finger-rings and bracelets have been found, made of this attractive greenblue substance. Gold beads have been found in a hoard of jewellery, probably the property of a goldsmith. Other stones used were carnelian and lapis lazuli; steatite is used in quantity for such objects as beads and "pieces" for use on a games-board. Harappan parents made toys for their children, and there may have been professional toy-makers. There are model oxen with movable heads, model carts with terra-cotta wheels, figures of women kneading flour, whistles made in the shape of a hollow bird, pottery rattles with clay pellets inside.

The commercial aspect of Harappan life is emphasized by the numerous weights and measures which have been found on city sites. The weights range from very large types, with lifting-rings attached, to small weights probably used by jewellers. They show consistent accuracy, and fall into a well-defined system. A decimal system was used for the higher weights; measures of length also followed a decimal system. A fragment of shell "rightly interpreted as part of a scale", was divided accurately into units of 0.264 ins., with "a mean error of 0.003 ins".

Irrigation was practised, and remains of dams have been found to hold back the water of the river after the annual flooding. The Harappans grew, among other crops, wheat and barley, peas, melons.

and on some of the seals there are representations of what may have been banana-trees. They were also stock-farmers, raising sheep and cattle, pigs and goats. The camel appears to have been known, also the buffalo, the Indian bison, the bear, and spotted deer. They also kept domestic dogs and cats. At one Harrappan site, Caanhu Daru, a brick was found over which a cat and a dog had run while the clay was still wet. The paw-marks were easily distinguishable, and, says Mackay, "the deep impression of the pads and their spread indicated the speed of both animals".[4] The dog, as usual, was in pursuit.

Few noteworthy examples of Harappan art have been found; in general the better-finished statues, in alabaster, steatite and bronze, are stiff and formalized. Occasionally there are exceptions. One of the most interesting is a little figure of a dancing girl in bronze, found six feet below the surface-level of a house in Mohenjo-daro. It is nude; the head is provocatively thrown back, and the left arm is covered almost entirely from shoulder to wrist with bangles. She is of the aboriginal type, perhaps from Baluchistan, with a flat nose, curly hair and large eyes. The resemblance to Indian art of historical times is remarkable.

Other interesting similarities occur in the human or divine figures depicted on the tiny seals found on Harappan sites. One of these shows a figure seated on a low stool. The figure has three heads and is crowned by a tall head-dress. The left arm is covered with bangles; on one side stands a buffalo, on the other a rhinoceros, and below the stool are two antelopes or goats. Sir John Marshall recognized in this figure the prototype of the Indian god Shiva, in his aspect as Pasupati, Lord of Beasts.

Occasionally one detects an affinity with the culture of Sumeria, with which the Harappans evidently had contact. For example, another seal has a representation of a figure with outstretched arms holding back lions. On another seal, which appears to have Sumerian affinities, a horned tiger is being attacked by a bull-man or "minotaur" reminiscent of the Sumerian Eabani created by the goddess Aruru to fight Gilgamesh.

No baked-clay tablets have been found, such as have revealed so much of the civilizations of Babylonia, Assyria and the Hittite Empire. Some of the seals are inscribed in a pictographic form of writing which cannot be read, as it bears no resemblance to any known script, and no bilingual clue has yet been discovered. (I was informed that Mr. Michæl Ventris, the brilliant young scholar who succeeded

[4] Mackay, Ernest: *The Indus Civilization,* Loval, Dickson & Thompson, Ltd., 1953.

in deciphering the Minoan "Linear B" script of Crete—without a bilingual—was about to set about this equally difficult task. Unhappily, Ventris was tragically killed in a motor accident a few weeks before these lines were written.)

The problem of dating has still not been completely solved, but from objects of other known cultures found on Harappan sites archæologists cautiously infer that the earliest date of the developed Harappan civilization (as represented by the cities) is not earlier than about 2500 B.C. However, both at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro there are still lower occupation levels which have not yet been examined. The rivers have risen considerably since these cities were built and below a certain depth it is impossible to proceed without elaborate pumping-gear.

Did the Indus Valley civilization develop independently or was it in any way related to the earlier valley-cultures of Lower Mesopotamia? Informed opinion seems to be that while the Harappans, whose civilization apparently developed after that of Sumeria, may have received the *idea* from that area, they developed their own distinctive culture pattern independently of Mesopotamia. "Evidence for contact with the West before 2300 B.C.," writes Wheeler, "is not impressive."[5]

As for the closing dates, the Indus civilization appears to have continued well into the first half of the second millennium B.C., i.e. the time of the Aryan invasion of about 1500 B.C. The traditions recorded in the *Rig Veda* have taken on a new aspect since the discovery of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. It now seems very possible that the "forts" and "castles" which the god Indra "rent as age consumed a garment" were the walled cities of the Harappans; not only Mohenjo-daro and Harappa itself but other fortified towns and villages of the same period which archæologists have discovered along the river banks between and beyond the two principal cities. "Literary (or rather oral) tradition and archæological inference have apparently more in common with each other than had previously been suspected."[5]

The reasons for the decline of the Indus Valley civilization are not entirely clear. Some authorities suggest that climatic changes, a reduction in rainfall, may have altered the character of the land so that it could no longer support the abundance of plant and animal life on which the Harappan economic structure depended. This is a debatable point; if there were climatic changes, were they brought about through natural causes, or man-made ones; or both? The millions of kiln-dried bricks used in the construction of Mohenjo-

[5] Wheeler, Sir Mortimer : *The Indus Age.*

daro, Harappa and other towns imply a large consumption of fuel for firing, and that certainly meant timber. Wood was also used extensively in Harappan buildings. Extensive felling of forests can alter a climate by reducing rainfall and encouraging soil erosion. It has happened in other parts of the world, and may have happened in the Indus Valley.

These at the moment can only be speculations, but it is certain, from an examination of the upper levels of Harappan cities, that in later years there was deterioration. The older, larger buildings were cut up into smaller rooms by partitions; the wide streets were encroached upon, lanes were choked with mean dwellings; clear evidence of political and economic decay. Yet the final blow which felled the tottering structure undoubtedly came from without. Dramatic evidence of armed attack was found at Mohenjo-daro and elsewhere.

In one room at Mohenjo-daro the excavators came upon the skeletons of thirteen women with a child, some wearing bracelets, beads and rings, in attitudes suggesting sudden death. One of the skulls had a sword-cut, and another showed signs of violence. Elsewhere in the city nine skeletons lay in strangely contorted attitudes in a shallow pit with two elephant tusks. It has been suggested that they are the remains of a family, possibly of ivory-workers, who in attempting to escape had been cut down by the attackers. The raiders may have looted the bodies but left the tusks, which would be of no value to them. One of the public "well-rooms" disclosed a scene of grim tragedy. "On the stairs were the skeletons of two persons, evidently lying where they died in a vain endeavour to use their last remaining strength to climb the stairs to the street. Remains of a third and fourth body were found closed outside. There seems no doubt that these people were murdered." In other parts of the town skeletons had been buried in tumbled heaps, without the funerary equipment which would have accompanied them had they been formally buried. In other places the bodies had been left where they lay.

In the light of such evidence, which appears to date from about the middle of the second millennium—the traditional date of the Aryan invasion—there seems little doubt of the identity of the attackers. "Indra," as Sir Mortimer Wheeler comments, "stands accused."

The founders of Hindu civilization brought with them the cultural traditions of their Aryan homeland, but, even from the few examples of Harappan art which have been found to date, there seems no doubt that the elements of the civilization of the conquered were absorbed by the conquerors, though some were ignored, e.g. Harappan sanitary engineering. Eventually a time came when even the

traditions of the ancient peoples were lost, their language forgotten, and their cities disappeared under mounds of earth and debris left by later occupiers. But from evidence accumulated by archæologists during the past thirty years, more and more is being learned concerning this lost civilization. From a study of pottery styles, it has been possible to trace the beginnings of Harappan culture in the hill-villages of the upland valleys, where the remote ancestors of the city-builders of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro lived before descending to the plain. At one site, Jarmo, in the foothills of northern Iraq, radio-carbon datings have given 5000 B.C. or a little later as an approximate date.

Eventually, settlements grew up along the banks of the Indus and its tributaries, and gradually, an integrated society developed, apparently dominated by Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, twin capitals linked by the great rivers. In the absence of any written records. one can only speculate as to the type of society represented by those two cities, but they suggest a highly-disciplined state, drawing its tribute of grain on which the community depended, and storing it in the great granaries under the shadow of the citadels. The regimented rows of barrack-like buildings, the rows of platforms where the corn was ground under supervision, all suggest a powerful state organization, probably governed, as in Sumeria, by priests or priest-kings.

On the whole the picture is a grim one. While admiring the efficiency of Harappan planning and sanitary engineering, one's general impression of Harappan culture is unattractive. There is a drab, inhuman—almost sub-human—atmosphere about their cities; streets of plain, undecorated, mud-brick buildings, which, as Wheeler remarks, "however impressive quantitatively, and significant sociologically, are æsthetically miles of monotony."

One imagines those warrens of streets, baking under the fierce sun of the Punjab, as human ant-heaps, full of disciplined, energetic activity, supervised and controlled by a powerful, centralized state machine; a civilization in which there was little joy, much labour, and a strong emphasis on material things. Modern parallels are not difficult to find. Was this, perhaps "1984"—B.C.?

V. *Race Movements and Prehistoric Culture*

Unlike the earlier selections, the pages which follow require careful study. They are taken from a chapter on 'Race Movements and Prehistoric Culture' which is found in the first volume (*The Vedic Age*) of the series on the *History and Culture of the Indian People,* edited

by R. C. Majumdar and A. D. Pusalker. The author of this excellent study is the well-known scholar and linguist from Bengal, SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI, Khaira, Professor of Indian Linguistics and Phonetics in the University of Calcutta.

Professor Chatterji argues the pre-Aryan and non-Aryan elements in Dravidian Culture from linguistic and anthropological sources, *The Vedic Age*, Vol. I, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1951, pages 158 to 168.

IN CERTAIN MATTERS the Dravidian and Austric contributions are deeper and more extensive than that of the Aryans. The pre-Aryans of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā were certainly in possession of a higher material culture than what the semi-nomadic Aryans could show.

The assumption that the Mohenjo-daro and Harappan people spoke a primitive Dravidian speech accords best with the subsequent trend of Indian history and civilization. From various aspects, a Mediterranean origin of the Dravidian people, its religion and civilization, appears to find good support. Reference may be made in this connexion to the city culture of Harappā and the ancient cities of Sind. On the positive side, the cult of Śiva and the institution of Yoga appear to have been characteristic of the religious life of the people of Sind and South Punjab. The Aryans knew of a Sky Father—*Dyaush Pitā*—and of an Earth Mother—*Pṛithvī Mātā*—but these divinities were vague nature deities, who merely typified the falling of the rain from the sky to help earth to produce corn and fruits. The Kols (e.g. the Santāls) had similarly a Sun god (*Sin Bonga*) and a Moon goddess (*Ninda Chando*) who were the great Father and Mother deities in the Kol pantheon. But the Dravidians had a conception of the forces of Life and of the Universe in the forms of a Great Mother Goddess and her male counterpart a Father God, and this conception, which was more profound, more mystic, more all-embracing and more deeply philosophical as well as more poetic than the simple Aryan idea of a material Sky Father and an equally material Earth Mother, the Dravidians appear to have brought to India from their original homeland in the islands of the Ægean Sea—Greece and Asia Minor. Mā or Kubele (Cybele) and Atthis, or Hepit and Teshup, the great Asianic Mother Goddess and Father God, the former having as her symbol or vehicle the lion, the latter the bull, form undoubtedly one of the bases on which the Śiva-Umā cult of Hindu India grew up.

From linguistics, it can be reasonably assumed that the oldest form of the word *Tamiḷ* or *Draviḍa* (which we can trace) was probably **Dramila* or **Dramiza*. We find that the Lycians of Asia Minor, a

pre-Indo-European Mediterranean people, called themselves in their inscriptions (written in their own speech in a script allied to the ancient Greek) *Trmmili*. Herodotus has noted that the Lycians originally came from the island of Crete, and that in Crete the pre-Hellenic Asianic people were known by a name which the Greeks wrote as *Termilai*. It would not perhaps be too much to assume that some at least of the Dravidian speakers of India who came ultimately from the Eastern Mediterranean tracts brought with them one of their national or tribal appellations *Termilai—Trmmili—Dramiza*, which became transformed into the modern name *Tamil* by the middle of the first millennium A.D. In South Sind, the Greeks noted a people called *Arabitai*: they might very well have been Dravidian speakers in the fourth century B.C., and the name suggests the one which the Telugus apply to the Tamilians—*Aravaḷu*: and *Arava* is explained scholastically as the Sanskrit word *a-rava* "speechless, voiceless," suggesting the unintelligibility of Tamil as a language for the Telugus. Be that as it may, the culture-world presented by Dravidian (Tamil) linguistic palaeontology gives a fairly high background of civilization, which can be compared with what has been unearthed at Mohenjo-daro and other places, and with such indirect references to non-Aryan (Dravidian) civilization and non-Aryan *milieu* as can be found in the Vedic writings. In 1856, Bishop Caldwell gave the following sketch of the pre-Aryan civilization of the Dravidians from the evidence of the words in use among the early Tamilians.[1] (I give the Tamil words within brackets after the English words): The Tamils or Dravidians "had 'kings' (*ko, ventan, mannan*) who dwelt in 'strong houses' (*koṭṭai, aran*) and ruled over small 'districts of country' (*nāṭu*). They had 'minstrels' (*puḷavan*) who recited 'songs' (*cheyyul*) at 'festivals' (*koṇṭāttam, tiruviza*); and they seem to have had alphabetical characters (*ezuttu*) written (*varai*) with a style (*iraku*) on palmyra leaves (*olai*), and a bundle of leaves was called a 'book' (*eṭu*); they acknowledged the existence of God, whom they styled *Ko* or king—a realistic title little known to orthodox Hinduism. They created to his honour a 'temple' which they called *Ko-il*, God's house (*koyil, kovil*). They had 'laws' and 'customs' (*kaṭṭalai, pazakkam*), but no lawyers or judges. Marriage existed among them. They were acquainted with the ordinary metals, with the exception of 'tin,' 'lead' and 'zinc', with the planets which were ordinarily known to the ancients (e.g. *veḷḷ*='Venus', *chevvay*='Mars', *viyāzam*='Jupiter' with the exception of 'Mercury' and 'Saturn.' They had 'medicines' (*maruntu*), 'hamlets' (*paḷḷī*) and 'towns' (*ūr, peṭṭai*), 'canoes,' 'boats',

[1] *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*, third edition (1913), p. 113.

and even 'ships' (small 'decked' coasting vessels—*toṇi, oṭam, vallam; kappal, paṭavu*), no acquaintance with any people beyond the sea, except in Ceylon, which was then, perhaps, accessible on foot at low water; and no word expressive of the geographical idea of 'island' or 'continent'. They were well acquainted with 'agriculture' (*er*='plough,' *velan-mai*='agriculture'), and delighted in 'war'. They were armed with 'bows' (*vil*) and 'arrows' (*ampu*), with 'spears' (*vel*) and 'swords' (*vāḷ*). All the ordinary or necessary arts of life, including 'spinning' (*nūl*), 'weaving' (*ney*), and 'dyeing' (*niram*) existed among them. They excelled in 'pottery,' as their places of sepulchre show." The late Professor P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar (Iyengar) compiled a remarkable work,[3] in which, on the basis of native Dravidian words in Old Tamil, he has given us a most detailed survey of the type of culture in all its ramifications which obtained among the Primitive Tamil or Dravidian people before they began to come under the influence of the Aryan speech and culture.

Hindu tradition is vaguely conscious of Hindu religious ideas and philosophy, practices and ritual falling under two great categories—*āgama* and *nigama*. *Nigama* stands for the Vedic, i.e. the pure Aryan world of ideas, centring round what has been called the Vedic *karma-kāṇḍa*, the practical religion of Vedic inspiration in which the *homa* or fire-sacrifice to the gods of the Vedic world forms the most note-worthy thing. *Āgama* indicates what may be described as the Tantric and Puranic domain of religion and ritual, and it includes Yoga as a special form of mystico-religious ideology and practice. Pure *Nigama* religion is what we see in the great Vedic sacrifices which are still performed from time to time. Āgamic religion and ritual is largely influenced by the Nigamic or Vedic, but it forms a world apart.

In ordinary Hindu usage, there is a good deal of compromise between the two. Take, for example, the distinctive Hindu ritual of the *pūjā*, by which we mean the worship of an image or a symbol of the divinity by treating the latter, after it has been consecrated, as a living personality, and bringing before it, as before a living being, cooked food, vestments, ornaments, and other offerings which are usable by a man, and showing grateful worship by offering to it flowers, the produce of the earth, and incense, and by waving lights in front of it and playing and singing before it. This is something which is quite different from the Vedic rite of the *homa*, in which a wood fire is lighted on an altar and certain offerings of food in the shape of meat and fat, butter and milk, cakes of barley, and *soma* or spirituous drink, are offered to the gods, who are not at all

[3] *Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture*, Madras, 1930

symbolized by an image, but are supposed to dwell in the sky and to receive these offerings through the fire.

The characteristic offerings in the *pūjā* rite, viz. flowers, leaves, fruits, water, etc. are not known to the *homa* rite, except in instances where it has been influenced by the *pūjā*. It has been suggested with good reason that *pūjā* is the pre-Aryan, in all likelihood the Dravidian, form of worship, while the *homa* is the Aryan: and throughout the entire early Vedic literature, the *pūjā* ritual with flowers, etc. offered to an image or symbol is unknown. The word *pūjā*, from a root *pūj*, appears, like the thing it connotes, to be of Dravidian origin also. This word or root is not found in any Aryan or Indo-European language outside India. Professor Mark Collins suggested[8] that the Sanskrit word *pūjā* (from which the root *pūj* was deduced later) was nothing but a *Dravidian pū* "flower" plus root **ge* "to do" (palatalized to *je*), which is found in Tamil as *chey*, in Kannada as *ge* and in Telugu as *che*: *pūjā* < **pū-ge*, **pū-je*, **pū-che* was thus a "flower ritual," a "flower service," a *pushpa-karma*, just as *homa* was described as *paśu-karma* or religious service entailing the slaughter of an animal. Jarl Charpentier of Sweden derived *pūjā* from a Dravidian root *pusu* meaning "to smear," as the smearing of sandal-paste or blood forms an important item in the *pūjā* ritual. But the use of blood, to be smeared over a piece of stone representing a god or spirit—the blood of a sacrificed animal being later replaced by red paint like the vermilion—would appear more to be an Austric or Proto-Australoid rite than Dravidian.

In any case, the pre-Aryan, and in all likelihood Dravidian, origin of this most noteworthy ritual of a finished Hindu religion, would appear to be quite reasonable to assume. In the present-day texture of Hindu culture and religion the warp appears to be Dravidian and the weft Aryan. *Pūjā* with flowers, leaves, and water was, so far as the first Aryans who came to India were concerned, an alien rite, a local "native" usage, not to be approved, much less adopted, by the Brāhmaṇas and others who claimed to be true Aryans. But "Greece captured her captor". The native or local cults and creeds did not die—on the other hand the exotic *homa* largely became moribund, being kept up artificially among limited groups of Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas, and the *pūjā* came to assume its present important place in the religious life of the mixed Hindu people which resulted from the fusion of the Aryan and the non-Aryan. The first conscious attempt to give the *imprimatur* to *pūjā* as a rite, which is to be taken sympathetically, we find in that great work of synthesis in Hindu thought and life, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* of the *Mahābhārata*, which

[8] *Dravidic Studies*, No. III (University of Madras), pp. 59 ff.

would appear to have been compiled round about the age of Christ; although through certain surreptitious rites like *kāka-bali* or offerings to crows and other birds, something analogous to the *pūjā* was being given a place in the *Gṛihya* or domestic rites of the blue-blooded Aryan householders. The *Gītā* passage (IX. 26) runs thus:

> *patram pushpam phalam toyam yo me bhaktyā prayachchhati,*
> *tad=aham bhakty-upahṛitam=aśnami prayatātmanah*:

"If anyone offers me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, and water, I receive that, offered in devotion by the person whose soul is disciplined."

The context makes it clear that here we have an apology for non-Vedic worship *vis-à-vis* the Vedic fire-sacrifice: this verse, in fact, forms the great charter for the *pūjā* ritual within the *milieu* of Vedic Brahmanism.

The acceptance of pre-Aryan (Dravidian) ritual meant also the acceptance of the conception of the divinity and of the mythological figures of the gods and goddesses which were current among them. In mediæval and modern Hinduism, certain divinities stand paramount like Śiva and Umā, Vishṇu (specially in his incarnations of Rāma and Kṛishṇa) and Śrī, together with some other gods and goddesses of a secondary character who claim the homage of the people like Hanumant, Gaṇeśa and Śītalā. The popular gods of the Vedic Aryans—Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, Soma, Sūrya, Ushas, Pūshan, Parjanya and the rest—gradually recede into the background, and a group of more puissant and more personal gods, more profound and cosmic and more philosophical in their conception, the Puranic gods of Hinduism headed by Śiva-Umā and Śrī Vishṇu, become established. As it has been said before, Śiva and Umā are in all likelihood fundamentally of Dravidian origin, and as such, they are the Indian modification—and philosophic sublimation—of the great Mother-Goddess and her consort of the Mediterranean peoples. The name *Śiva* has been explained as being at least partly of Dravidian origin: in Tamil, for instance, *Śivan* (*Chivan*) means red, and the divinity was known to the early Aryans as *Nīla-lohita* "the Red One with blue (throat)" (referring to the legend found in the Purāṇas of later times and unquestionably mentioned in Ṛgveda, (X. 136, vii), of *Śiva* having drunk up the world poison and preserved it in his throat which became marked with blue for this). *Śambhu*, another common name or epithet of Śiva, has been compared with the Tamil *chempu* or *śembu* meaning "copper," i.e. "the red metal." Śiva and the Vedic Rudra have been identified: it is just likely that the name of the

Red God of the Dravidian speakers, the most important divinity in their pantheon, was first rendered into the Aryan speech as **Rudhra*, and then this name was easily identified with an already existing Aryan Storm God, the father of the Maruts or the Storm Winds, whose name *Rudra* in Aryan meant quite a different thing—"the Roarer" (from root *rud*).[4] The name *Umā* recalls *Mā*, the Great Mother of the Asianic and East Mediterranean peoples: and *Durgā*, as one of the common epithets of the Mother Goddess Umā, we can compare with *Trqqas*, a deity mentioned in the Lycian inscriptions of Asia Minor.[5] *Vishṇu* is partly Aryan, a form of the Sun-God, and partly at least the deity is of Dravidian affinity, as a sky-god whose colour was of the blue sky (cf. Tamil, *viṇ* "sky" and the Middle Indo-Aryan or Prākrit form of Vishṇu, which was *viṇhu, veṇhu*).[6] *Śrī* is, to start with, an Aryan divinity, the Indian counterpart of the Goddess connected with the harvest or corn and with wealth, beauty, and well-being, whom we find in the Italic world as *Ceres* among the Latins. But in her association with Vishṇu, as *Gaja-lakshmī* for instance, she is indigenous and pre-Aryan.[7] *Kṛshṇa* (in Prākrit *Kaṇha*, in Tamil *Kaṇṇan*) is a demon opposed to Indra in the Ṛgveda; according to P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar, he represnts, partially at least, a Dravidian God of Youth, who has later been identified with Vishṇu as an incarnation of his.

Another Dravidian God of Youth and youthful powers, of bravery and war, was *Murukan*, who in the composite Puranic mythology became *Kumāra* or *Skanda*, the son of *Śiva*.[8] *Gaṇeśa* the elephant-headed demon who was to be appeased at the outset of any function to avert supernatural hindrances, remained such a demon with the Mahāyāna Buddhists, but with the Brahmanical Hindus he was transformed into the benign god who removes obstacles and who typifies wisdom. The very character of the god as having an elephant-head shows his native Indian, i.e., pre-Aryan origin.

The phallic symbol of Śiva, the *linga*, appears to be, both in its form and name, of Austric or Proto-Australoid origin. We should remember that the mysterious upright conical stones set up on the ground (like the menhirs in the Celtic areas in Europe) were very much in evidence as cult objects among the Mon-Khmers and the Kols, and these bore a resemblance to the digging stick used among

[4] P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar (Iyengar), *Life in Ancient India in the Age of the Mantras* (Madras, 1912), p. 125; *Dravidic Studies*, No. III, pp. 61-62.

[5] S. K. Chatterji, "Dravidian Origins and the Beginnings of Indian Civilization," (*MR*, Dec. 1924, p. 679).

[6] P. T. S. Aiyangar, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[7] *Dravidic Studies*, No. III, p. 62.

[8] Cf. also *Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture.*

them as a primitive plough; and Jean Przyluski has shown, as it has been noted before, how the words *linga, lakuṭa, laguḍa, langula* are of Austric origin. But the figure of Śiva as the great Yogin, seated in yogic meditation, as *Virūpāksha* or "the terrible One," as *Paśupati* or "the Lord of Animals, or Souls", as *Ūrdhva-linga* or "the One with the erect creative force,"—in fact, all the deeper and more philosophical traits in the conception of Śiva appear to have been known among the Mohenjo-daro people, as shown by the very important seal with the figure of a divinity who can only be identified with Śiva of later times. And assuming that the Mohenjo-daro and Harappā people were Dravidian speakers, this would be only another corroboration of the Śiva idea and the Śiva legends being of Dravidian origin: only this symbol of the *linga* in the *gaurī-paṭṭa* or *yoni* being derived to some extent from the Austric menhirs, which survived till recently in the Muṇḍā *sasan-diris* or family burial stones.

Zoomorphic divinities, or the lower animals as typifying the forces of nature and supplying symbols or figures for the supernatural or the godhead, appear to have been known to the Aryans only to a limited extent. Thus Indra and other powerful gods have been compared with bulls or rams, and Agni with the horse, and there is also the divine horse named *Dadhikrāvan* in the Veda. But the extent to which zoomorphic deities came into prominence in Puranic Hinduism is something noteworthy, rivalling the ancient Egyptian pantheon in this respect. The submerged totemism of the Proto-Australoids possibly was the oldest and most powerful source of influence for this, and the worship of the Nāgas or serpentine deities and water spirits would appear to have come from the Proto-Australoids. *Garuḍa* as the vehicle bird of Vishṇu is partly a divine eagle—*Suparṇa*—of the Aryans and partly of Dravidian or Mediterranean origin; the name would appear to be Dravidian (cf. Tamil *kazu* "kite, eagle"). The sacredness of the ox and cow may have some Aryan elements in it, but the honour paid to the cow among the Iranian Aryans might be, at its basis, of Dāsa-Dasyu origin, as much as in India.

The great zoomorphic deity of India is of course Hanumant, the so-called Monkey-God. His greatness has no doubt been added to in later times by the Bhakti school of mediæval Hinduism, which saw in him an ideal devotee of Rāma, God incarnate as the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa* legend. But in popular belief throughout the greater part of India (in Bengal alone his worship is not so intensely popular), he is something more than a simple *Bhakta* or devotee. He is a fertility deity, who gives children to barren women; and he is the helper at need and remover of obstacles. It seems, as F. E. Pargiter's significant

research[9] into the name of Hanumant warrants us in assuming, that there was a great Monkey-God who obtained the worship of the pre-Aryan peoples (namely Dravidians) of India, and whose name was in the Dravidian speech just "the Male Monkey" (in Tamil, *Aṇ-manti*). The Aryan speakers came to know this god, and his name was at first translated into the Aryans' language as *Vṛishā-kapi.* His worship was slowly entering by the backdoor among the Aryan speakers through contact with the Dravidians, and this was resented by a certain element among the Aryan people: but others were acquiescing in the introduction of this "native" cult. An echo of this ideological conflict we find in the *Vṛishā-kapi* became admitted into the newly formed Aryan-non-Aryan pantheon, and his original Dravidian name *Aṇ-manti,* as in Tamil, was then Sanskritized into *Hanumant,* and under this name he is still a powerful deity in popular Hinduism, the sublimation of his character by *Bhakti* adding but fresh lustre to his pristine popularity as a strong helper in need and remover of distress, the rough and ready god of a primitive people.

The extent to which the Aryan religion has been modified by Austric and Dravidian contacts is sufficient indication of the profound influences exerted by the latter in the evolution of the Hindu religion. There has been a widespread racial mixture, as anthropology has indicated. In culture, speaking in the Indian way, one may say that over twelve annas in the rupee is of non-Aryan origin. The bases of Indian economy—food (rice or wheat or millet with pulses or lentils as relish, milk products like *ghee* and curds, vegetables, occasionally a little goat or mutton, and fish and oil of various sorts where milk is not common, as opposed to the Aryan meal of barley cakes and meat and butter), dress (unsewn cotton cloth worn in three pieces as *dhotī* or *sārī,* i.e. loincloth, *dupaṭṭā* or shawl, and head-cloth or turban, in place of the woollen garments of the Aryans), and dwelling, are pre-Aryan; our way of thinking is un-Aryan—the syntax of the later Indo-Aryan dialects agrees more with that of the Dravidian languages than with that of Vedic and of the extra-Indian Indo-European languages; our counting and computation is largely on the basis of *eight,* which is Dravidian (Mark Collins has explained *ompattu* the Tamil word for "nine" as being really the Aryan *ūna* "one less" plus Tamil *pattu* "ten," and the Telugu *tommiḍi* as really meaning "broken ten" thus suggesting that *eight* was the common number in computation), combined to some extent with counting by *tens,* which is Aryan, and to a slight extent on the basis of *twenty* as the highest number, which is Austric (as Jean Przyluski has shown). Many of our social institutions and conventions (e.g., cer-

9 *JRAS.,* 1913, p. 400.

tain usages regarding prohibited degrees in marriage, and customs like a wife being on familiar terms with her husband's younger brother but regarding his elder brother as her father) and a good many of our wedding and other customs (e.g. the practice known as *strī-āchāra* with its attendant paraphernalia of the various produce of the earth arranged in a winnowing fan, the use of turmeric and vermilion in the wedding ritual, the employment of the coconut and betel-leaf in many of our ceremonies) are of non-Aryan origin. We have a fairly extensive element from the Austric and the Dravidian languages in our Indo-Aryan speech: the number—at least a hundred for Austric, and some four hundred and fifty for Dravidian as given by Kittel in his *Kannaḍa Dictionary*—seems to be on the way to increase the more our knowledge of this matter (*sic*) is deepening and widening. In their phonetics, Indo-Aryan, Austric and Dravidian have converged more or less to a common Indian sound-system. Despite a number of noteworthy differences due to original diversity of race and speech and to climatic and economic conditions, the bases of Indian pre-Aryan (Austric and Dravidian) life and culture, modified by the language and ideology of the Aryans, and later by the ideology of Islam, still remain and they form a specifically Indian background for a civilization and an outlook that may be described as pan-Indian.

The discovery of Mycenaean artifacts in Greece has proved the truth of what the great explorer of Ægean culture, Sir Arthur Evans, had suspected, that a good deal of the heroic legends of Greece as well as of the legends of their gods and goddesses was of pre-Hellenic, i.e. pre-Indo-European, Ægean or Mediterranean origin, and these were simply Hellenized by being rendered into the Indo-European language of the Greeks as soon as this language became established on its new territory. The stories of the Iliad and the Odyssey and of Œdipus and other heroes were according to this view of Ægean origin, and this has been corroborated, in spirit at least, for some other connected legends. A similar thing appears to have taken place in India. Myths and legends of Gods and Heroes current among the Austrics and Dravidians, long antedating the period of Aryan advent in India (*c*. 1500 B.C.), appear to have survived the Aryan impact and to have been rendered into the Aryan language in late and garbled, or "improved," versions, accommodating themselves to the Aryan God- and Hero-worlds; and it is these myths and legends of gods, kings, and sages which we largely find in the Purāṇas. The Rāma legend looks like a blend of three distinct stories without any historicity put together at different times (the Ayodhyā intrigue and the banishment of Rāma, the abduction of Sītā and her recovery by Rāma, and the

episode of the monkey princes), and seems to have grown up in Eastern India, with an Austric background; but later it was re-edited as a national poem within the gorgeous framework of the composite and highly complex Hindu civilization of 2,000 years ago. The Mahābhārata story, on the other hand, which developed in the Midland (present-day Western United Provinces and Eastern Punjab), would appear to embody a good deal of the legends, traditions, and history of the Aryans as well as of the mixed Aryan-non-Aryan peoples, and was created consciously as the national poem of a new Hindu nation of mixed origin welded into one people under Brāhmaṇa guidance. Viewed in this light, the pre-Vedic antiquity of a number of heroic tales and legends and dynastic "histories" as being really pre-Aryan, possibly Dravidian, can be properly understood, as cases of rendering in the Aryans' language of pre-Aryan material....

The speakers of the Austric, Dravidian and Indo-European Aryan tongues, racially Proto-Australoids, Mediterraneans, Nordics, Alpines, and Dinarics, made up the Indian people and built up the civilization of India. After this civilization had taken its definite colour and its special orientation, by the middle of the first millennium B.C., another new racial and culture-language element came into India—the Mongoloid Sino-Tibetan speakers—the Kirātas; but they touched only the fringe of India in the North-east, and their influence was but local, and not of much significance. According to a Tibetan tradition of very doubtful value, the Tibetans first settled in Tibet during the time of the Buddha. But it was over a thousand years after that, in the seventh century A.D., that they came in active contact with India—an India which was already far advanced in her composite Aryan-non-Aryan culture. The various Sino-Tibetan tribes were in a very primitive and backward condition, and they did not have much to give to the Indians, of Austric-Dravidian-Aryan affinities and origin. There is a Mongoloid stratum in the Himālayas and in the tracts immediately to the South, in Assam, in North and East Bengal; and in the evolution of Aryan languages like Gorkhali or Nepāli, Bengali and Assamese, some Sino-Tibetan (Tibeto-Burman) influence has been suggested. The Sino-Tibetan peoples, at least those among them who could benefit by their contact with Indian culture, thoroughly imbibed it and, like the Newārs of Nepāl valley, became fully Indianized. It is only where they are remote from the Aryan-speaking Indians that they are able to maintain their separate identity a little; but their absorption into an Aryan-speaking Indian body-politic is inevitable, whether in Nepāl or in Bengal or in Assam. But in the process of their becoming completely Indianized, they are sure to make at

least some temperamental contribution to the Indian populations of the North and the North-east, if not much in the way of the material or spiritual; and it is for the future to disclose what line this Kirāta, this Indo-Mongoloid or Mongoloid contribution to Indian mentality and culture will take.

VI. Prehistory in South India

Megalithic sites, urns, ornaments, and skulls found in Southern India have given the occasion for speculation and surmises concerning the original home of the Dravidians. Several writers argue a Mediterranean home and origin. The following extract is from M. GOETZ, *India, Five thousand years of Indian Art,* Methuen, London, 1959, pages 33 and 34.

THE PREHISTORY OF Southern India—which lasted until about the 3rd century B.C.—is much more complex. It seems fairly probable that the same type of Mediterranean people who created the Indus Civilzation, advanced through Mahārāshtra to the Tamil country; that it is responsible for the prevalence of brachycephals there; and that it imposed its language, the Dravidian, on the South. But there are no direct links with the Indus Civilization; instead, many observations speak for a direct contact with Iran, Iraq, Arabia, Syria and Egypt. The South-Indian cult of Śiva and Pārvatī links up with the cult of the moon god and the "Lady of the Mountain" at Ur, their ceremonial nuptials, their palace-temple, the temple slaves, the hierodules (*devadāsīs*). South Indian painted pottery often resembles that of Tepe Hissar in Iran. Egyptian alabaster vases were discovered in Malabar. Terracotta sarcophagi, with or without legs, have their counterparts in Syria. The most common form of burial was the cromlech or stone circle, containing either a cist or an urn, or both; funeral accessories are large egg-shaped pots on ring-stands, polished blacktopped pots and lapislazuli beads. The cists, built of thick stone slabs, often have a hole on the northern or eastern side. This type, which seems to have migrated north rather late (*c.* 200 B.C.) from the uttermost South, appears to have come from overseas, the coast of the Arabian Sea, Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, even Brittany. The urn-burials of Ādichanallūr (Tinnevelly district) contain golden diadems and mouthpieces, iron and bronze implements which are again related to Bronze Age finds in Palestine (Gaza, Gerar) and Cyprus. Rock tombs in the Deccan (Purandhar) resemble those of early Jewish times in Palestine. The

cairns and barrows of the Nilgiris, on the other hand, have yielded bronze bowls similar to those found at Nimrud (Assyria) and Wan (Armenia). All these finds point to trade relations by sea which are also proved by the Indian names of articles imported into Egypt, Palestine (e.g. Solomon's expedition to Ophir=Sopara near Bombay), Syria and Assyria. The more regrettable it is that all literary evidence is missing and that the history of the famous Śamgam Age (generally dated c. 300 B.C.—A.D. 300) of Tamil literature remains shadowy, and that only in the second half of the first millennium of the Christian era can we first tread on firm historical ground.

VII. Prehistoric Antiquities

Ādichanallūr in Tirunelveli District, in the extreme south of India, is the most ancient site yet unearthed in Southern India. A great deal more remains to be excavated. What one of the earlier writers on the Ādichanallūr finds, ALEXANDER REA, has to say in his book, *Catalogue of Prehistoric Antiquities of Ādichanallūr and Perumbāir, Madras,* Government Press, Madras, 1915, pages 1 to 6, is most revealing about the scope for Archaeology in the South.

THE SITE AT Ādichanallūr[1] stands on the right bank of the Tāmbaraparni river, about two miles west of the town of Srivaikuntam in the Tinnevelly District. It was first brought to notice in 1876, when it was visited by Dr. Jagor of Berlin, accompanied by Mr. Stuart, the Acting Collector of Tinnevelly, and by the District Engineer.

The Collector, in a letter to Government,[2] said: "We commenced excavations in the side of a hill consisting chiefly of quartz gravel with boulders of the same material and resting on gneiss rock and within a superficial area of twenty-five or thirty square yards, we discovered from twenty to thirty baked earthen pots varying in size from three feet nine by three feet six down to ten inches either way, of very various shapes, and of shapes in most cases more elegant and of a better manufacture than any one sees at the present day in the bazaars.

"These pots, when examined, were found to contain, besides

[1] *Vide* Reports of the Archæological Survey, Southern Circle, for 1899-1900 to 1903-04, and of the Archæological Survey of India for 1902-03 and 1903-04.

[2] Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department (No. 329 of 27th March 1876).

earth, gravel and stones, a variety of objects of great interest to the antiquarian, the ethnologist, and to science generally.

"Upwards of fifty kinds of baked earthenware utensils of all sizes and shapes, a considerable number of iron weapons and implements, chiefly knives or short sword-blades and hatchets, and a great quantity of bones and skulls were discovered. In one very interesting case, two small pots were found within a large one, together with the bones as in most cases of a nearly complete skeleton, containing what it was impossible to mistake for anything else but the outer coats of grains of rice and of the dry grain known in Tinnevelly as samei. The grain itself had disappeared, but the outer coating—probably of silica—had remained.

"Several places at considerable distances, one at least 300 or 400 yards from our principal excavation, were found to contain similar sepulchral urns, and the surface of the quartz hill above was strewn over with broken pieces of pottery of a similar character. Our excavation in all probability only touched one point of an extensive ancient cemetery or catacomb in which the dead of an age, the habits of which are probably quite unknown in India at the present day, are disposed of in this singular manner, that is to say, by placing the skeleton or the body inside a large earthenware vase or pot together with two, three or four small pots apparently containing food for the dead and weapons and implements of iron ready for use when he reached another world." All these articles were taken away by Dr. Jagor for the Berlin Museum, and none of them reached the Madras Museum.[1]

At that time, the ground was used for the excavation of gravel, and as the workmen had a superstitious dread of disturbing the urns, which they have since got over, the exhumed urns, found in the course of the digging, were left standing or exposed. Thus a good collection of objects was found ready for removal without much trouble or expense.

A proposal was afterwards made to continue the excavations, by removing the whole of the soil from certain areas, leaving the urns standing exposed, which would have been rather a stupendous undertaking. But fortunately the proposal was dropped.

Orders were given by Government to leave the site undisturbed, but these appear to have been unattended to, for quarrying has been going on continuously ever since, with the result that vast quantities of these interesing relics must have been destroyed.

I first visited the site in the official year 1899-1900, when some

[1] I have ascertained that certain objects collected by Dr. Jagor at Ādichanallūr are preserved in the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde.

digging was done. Further excavations were conducted by me for a few months annually up to the official year 1903-04. The collection now in the Madras Museum, and an almost equally large number of duplicates are the results obtained.

Description of the site.—The site extends to slightly over one hundred acres of land included in some villages at and near Ādichanallūr,[4] nearly twelve miles to the south-east of Tinnevelly town. It is a long piece of high ground, extending north to south, on the south bank of the river Tāmbaraparni, with a small hill at the end adjoining the river. One peculiarity in regard to such prehistoric sites is that whenever possible, high land, waste or rocky or such as is unsuitable for cultivation, is that which has been generally selected for burial sites. This has already been mentioned in a previously published paper of mine.[5] Another fact is that in the neighbourhood of these sepulchral sites, there is often found the evidence of an ancient settlement. Cemeteries are usually situated on the south side of a town, the south being the abode of *Yama,* the God of Death; this having from time immemorial, been selected wherever possible, as the site for burials.

About the centre of the ground some three feet of surface soil is composed of gravel, with decomposed quartz rock below. The rock has been hollowed out for the urns, with a separate cavity for each of them.

In this burial ground the objects were found both inside and outside large urns of a pyriform shape. The urns were at an average distance of about six feet apart and at from three to twelve feet or more below the surface. Some were found placed over other ones. An idea of the deposits which exist in the whole area, may thus be obtained, as an acre probably holds over a thousand urns. This is the most extensive and important prehistoric burial place as yet known in Southern India. There are hundreds of prehistoric sites in several of the Madras districts which may contain two or three dozen urns, but none equal to this in extent.

Contents of the urns and description of the objects.—The objects found comprised gold,[6] bronze,[7] and iron[8] articles and pottery. The

4 Probably the village originally had the name of Ādittanallūr from the fact that one of the kings was known by he name of Ādittan.

5 "Some Prehistoric Burial Places in Southern India", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Vol. LVII, 1889.

6 It might be interesting, on some future occasion, to get this analysed as considering the age, it is not likely to have any added alloy.

7 From analysis it was found that the alloy consisted of copper 75 per cent, tin 23 per cent., lead 0.2 per cent., iron 0.4 per cent., and the casting seemed to contain some of the copper in the form of copper oxide.

8 On examination this was found to be a particularly pure wrought iron

gold articles, which were probably used as diadems, vary in size and are oval in shape : some have a strip extending beyond the two extremities with a small hole for a wire or string at each end. They are thin plates ornamented with triangular and linear dotted designs and all were found folded up in a manner which suggests that some symbolical meaning may have been attached to the practice. Of iron, many implements and weapons were found always placed point downwards, as if they had been thrust into the surrounding earth by the attendant mourners. There are no implements or weapons in bronze, all articles in this metal being vessels of varied shape, personal ornaments, such as rings, bangles and bracelets, or ornaments which have been attached to the bases and lids of vases, such as buffaloes with wide curved horns. The domestic animals represented in bronze are the buffalo, goat or sheep and cock; and the wild animals are the tiger, antelope and elephant. There are also representations of flying birds. There are sieves in bronze in the form of perforated cups fitted into small basins, the metal of these cups being extremely thin, and the basins only a little thicker. The perforations in the cup are in the form of dots arranged in a variety of designs, chiefly concentric circles around the bottom, and concentric semi-circles sometimes interlacing around the rim. Numerous human bones and skulls have been found, and one of the latter in particular, from an urn which was devoid of earth, retained its shape in perfect condition. This skull was taken from the bottom of the urn, which contained only bones of large size and the decomposed debris of smaller ones. Against one of the inner sides of the urn, leant the bones of the legs and arms of the skeleton, while below, in addition to the skull, were the vertebrae, ribs and other smaller bones exactly as one would expect them after the body, as evidently was the case in this instance, had been placed in the urn in a crouching or a sitting position. In only a few instances did an urn contain the complete bones of a skeleton, and in such cases it was always of large size, being nearly three feet in diameter.

Concerning the Ādichanallūr prehistoric burial site, M. Lapicque (Bull. Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, 1905),[9] writes as follows: "Avec une autorisation spéciale de l'administration anglaise, j'allai pratiquer quelques journées de fouilles dans le gisement réservé d'Adichannallour. J'ai rapporté un specimen des urnes funéraires, avec une collection assez complète du mobilier funéraire . . . . J'ai rapporté aussi un crâne en assez bon état, et parfaitement déterminable. Il est hyperdolichocéphale et s'accorde avec la série que le service d'

with a characteristic fibrous texture, with 25 per cent carbon (by combustion).

[9] Annual Report of the Madras Government Museum, 1905-06, pp. 5 and 6.

archèologie de Madras a déjà réunie. Je pense que la race d'Adichanallour appartient aux Protodravidiens."

Dr. Thurston states : "The measurements of six of the most perfect skulls from Ādichanallūr in the Museum collection give the following results :

Cephalic length, cm.	*Cephalic breadth, cm.*	*Cephalic index.*
18·8	12·4	66
19·1	12·7	66·5
18·3	12·4	67·8
18	12·2	67·8
18	12·8	71·1
16·8	13·1	78

Two of the skulls are conspicuously prognathous—a character which appears in a few Tamil and Telugu skulls in the Museum collection.

The following extract from my notes shows that the hyperdolichocephalic type survives in the dolichocephalic inhabitants of the Tamil country at the present day :

Class.	*Number examined.*	*Cephalic index below 70.*
Palli	40	64.4; 66.9; 67 ; 68.9; 69.6
Paraiyan	40	64.8; 69.2; 69.3; 69.5.
Vellāla	40	67.9; 69.6."

The modern system in India of interring a selection of bones from the cremated body seems to have been the method followed at Ādichanallūr, though there is no evidence of cremation at that place. All the finds, however, point to the fact that only certain bones were buried.

On several of the bronzes are traces of cloth, which have been preserved by contact with the oxidized metal. Many of the vessels contained rice and millet seeds, while in a number of urns there were fragments of mica in pieces about an inch in length. The only stone implements found, were neolithic domestic utensils; a few cornelian beads, bronze beads and necklaces occurred also. A stone for grinding sandalwood was found buried outside, but all the other stone articles mentioned above were found inside urns. For the most part the pottery is well made, the clay being of a thin texture, in some cases red, in others black or a combination of the two colours. Only a few instances of applied colour occur, and little or no orna-

ment is used; such as there is, consists of short dotted lines and is disposed diagonally around the rim. The urns are of coarse, thick, red pottery, adorned in some cases with incised crude ornament.

This site is still an inexhaustible field of archæological research of the most valuable description. The deposits, if fully excavated, would stock several museums with objects of the most interesting description, for almost every excavation brings to light something new. Many prehistoric sites have been examined in India, but none so extensive in its results as this. Large tracts at Ādichanallūr are yet untouched. The high ground on the east, within the limits of Ādichanallūr village, had anciently been a village site. In digging this ground, about a foot of deposited gravelly soil was found on the surface washed down from the higher ground. Below that, to a depth of about six feet, ashes mixed with the bones and horns of animals, broken pottery, etc., in short, the usual debris of a village site, were found.

From experience, it was possible to judge at the very commencement of the excavation of an urn, whether to expect a gold diadem in it or not, for generally the urns that contain diadems are at a great depth, and are overlaid with heavy stones. Out of many urns excavated, only a few gold ornaments were found, evidently in the case of persons of rank or importance. When the covering stones were removed, we first got a large supply of pottery, then several articles, such as weapons of iron, some of which have had wooden handles, and bronze vessels, lids or ornamental objects. These were in large numbers both inside and outside the urns.

The comparative rarity of bronze objects and their use for personal ornaments, show that this metal must have been scarce, highly valued, and used only by the higher class of people. Thus the people of those days appear to have been skilful in moulding pottery, in casting or working metals, in weaving and in working stone and wood. The ornamentation of the pottery consists only of embossed dots and incised lines, for the most part in triangular or simple geometrical designs. The bronzes exhibit a high degree of skill in workmanship and manipulation of the metal, while the same may be said of the iron implements. All this confirms historical accounts as to the early skill of Indians in the working of metals.

Chapter Two

LANGUAGE

I. The Dravidian Languages : Grouping and Distribution

Tamil is one of the Dravidian group of languages. From the existence of Dravidian languages in Central and Northern-India and the number of Dravidian loan words in Sanskrit, it is argued that Dravidian speakers at one time were very widespread in Northern India. KAMIL ZVELEBIL, Professor of Dravidology in Charles University, Prague, in the first pages of an article, "An Introduction to the comparative study of Dravidian", enumerates the Dravidian languages and briefly traces their history and genetic relationship. *Archiv Orientálni*, 33, 1965, pages 367 to 372.

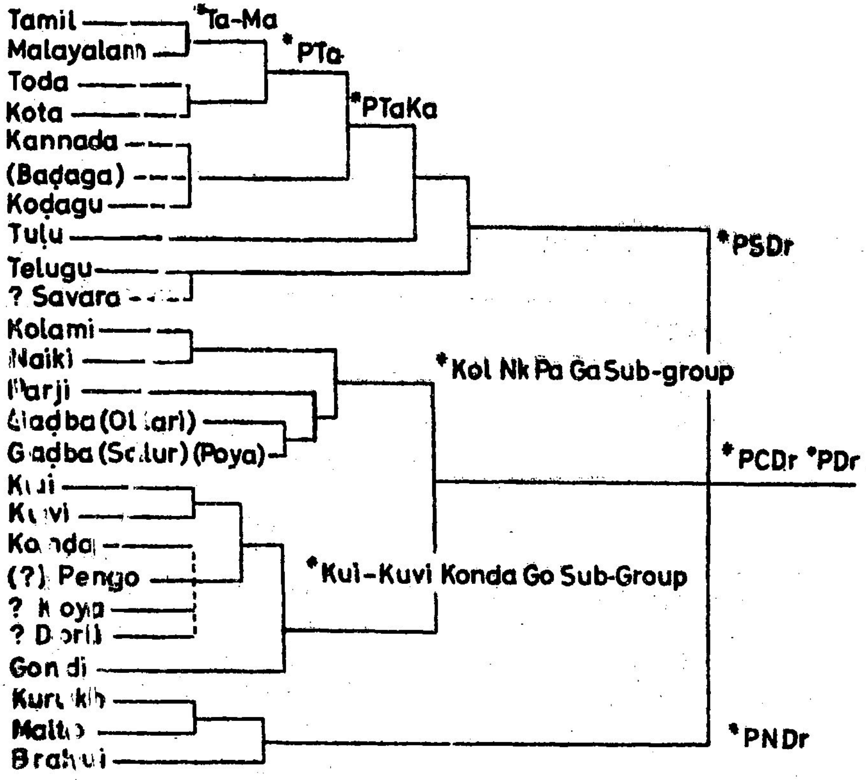
ACCORDING TO THE present state of our knowledge, we may set up the scheme I (shown on p. 44) illustrating the groupings and sub-groupings among the various Dravidian languages, and their possible genetic relations:[1]

For the South Dravidian sub-family, we may probably set up the scheme II (shown on p. 45) indicating the historical and genetic relations among its members.

Kannada and Telugu; further Tulu, and a number—possibly eighteen or more—non-literary languages spoken by a number of minor nationalities and tribes:

Toda, Kota, Kodagu, Savara (?), Kolami, Naiki, Parji, Gadba (in two dialects, Ollari and Salur, formerly called Poya), Kui, Kuvi,

[1] The abbrevation P stands for proto, PDr for Proto-Dravidian, N for Northern, C for Central and S for Southern.



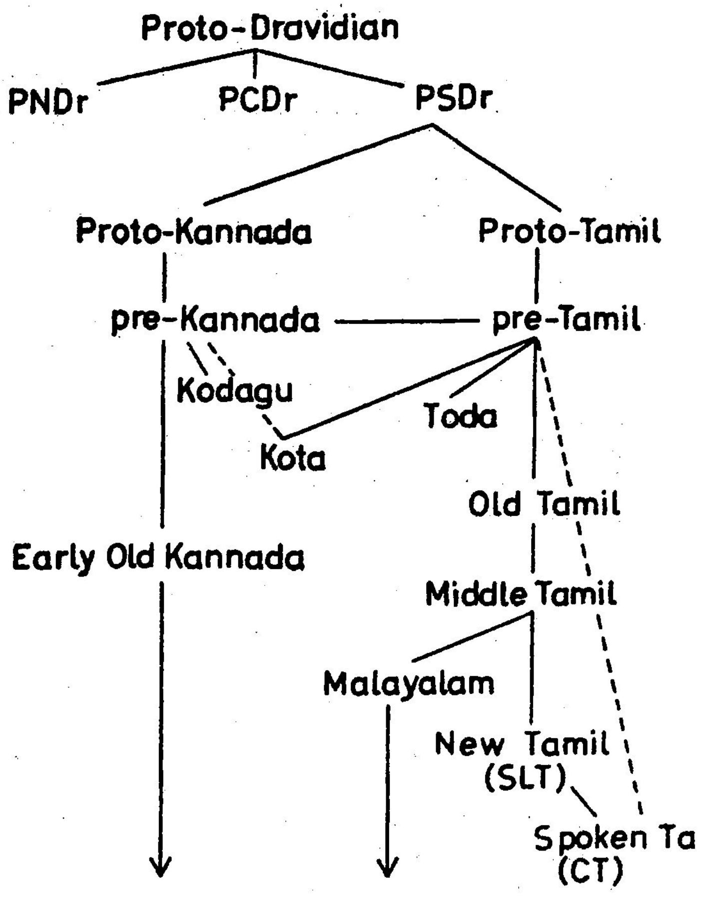
SCHEME I. Groupings and genetic relations of various Dravidian languages.

Konda, Pengo (?), Koya (?), Dorli (?), Gondi (with a number of dialects), Kurugh, Malto and Brahui.

It is not yet certain that all the Dravidian languages have been found. Thus Pengo (with close relations to Kui and Kuvi) was discovered only in 1957-58, and it is well possible that future investigation will add some more languages notably in Central India but also in the extreme South West. It is also not clear what are the relations of a number of speeches like Savara (allied to Telugu and spoken by the Savara Dora in South Koraput), Dorli (of South Bastar), Koya (spoken in South West Koraput), Kaikāḍāī (said to be a Tamil dialect), Kāḍar (said to be a Tamil or Malayalam dialect), Baḍaga (probably a dialect of Kannada) and some other speeches, to the cognate languages and to each other. It is not unlikely that some of them at least are independent languages of the family (as Pengo almost surely is, and perhaps also Dorli, Koya, Savara, etc.).

From the four literary languages, Tamil is the one which is the most well-known, enjoys the greatest geographical extension, has the

richest and most ancient literature, paralleled in India only by that of Sanskrit, and has a phonological (and to some extent also grammatical) system which corresponds rather closely to the state of affairs in the parent Proto-Dravidian.



SCHEME II. Historical and genetical relations among the South Dravidian sub-family.

Besides the state of Madras (Tamilnad) where it is spoken by about 34,000,000 speakers, it is widely used in Ceylon (2,500,000), in Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam (about 1,000,000 speakers), in East and South Africa (almost 250,000 speakers), in British Guiana, and on the islands of Fiji, Mauritius, Réunion, Madagascar, Trinidad and Martinique. It is perhaps not an exaggeration when we say that Tamil as a "world-language" is being spoken by about 40,000,000 people. The oldest literary monuments of the language belong probably to the 3rd Century B.C., and the earliest inscriptions in Hybrid

Tamil, written in Brāhmī, are approximately of the same age.

For Tamil we have attested, since the earliest time, at least two forms, the literary and the colloquial. Today, there exists in Tamil a number of local dialects, the major dialect regions being the Northern-and-Eastern region, the Western region, the Southern region and Ceylon. Apart from regional dialects, a number of dialects correlates with social diversity, the chief division being between the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin speech; finally, there is a dichotomy between the literary language, use also in formal speech, and the ordinary *common* colloquial (abbr. here as CT).

Malayalam, spoken in the state of Kerala by about 15,000,000 of people, has its origin in a Western dialect of the Middle Tamil period. Epigraphically it is attested since the 10th century. It began its independent literary life approximately in the 13th or 14th century. Tamil and Malayalam form thus a very close sub-group (Ta.-Ma.) of the South Dravidian sub-family.

Malayalam has three distinct territorial dialects: South Kerala, Central Kerala and North Kerala. Apart from the regional dialects, it has several clearly marked communal dialects based on caste differences (Namboodiri dialect, Nayar dialect, Moplah dialect, Nasrāṇi dialect, Pulaya dialect, and so on). It seems that the distinction between modern literary Malayalam and the colloquial form of speech is not so sharp as it is in Tamil.

In the Nilgiris and other mountainous regions near the cross-sections of the Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada linguistic borders, several minor tribes are living who speak Dravidian languages: the Kota artisans (about 1500 speakers near Kotagiri), the Toda shepherds (about 600 speakers), and the Baḍaga agriculturists (about 60,000) speaking most probably a dialect of Kannada. Some 70,000 speakers in Coorg speak Kodagu.

The earliest inscriptions in Kannada, a language used by some 17 millions of speakers in the state of Mysore and in some isolated colonies within the frontiers of India (e.g. more than 100,000 in Madurai), dated from about A.D. 450, but it seems that the process of separation of Kannada from the Proto-Kannada-Tamil sub-group began as early as in the 4th-5th century B.C. The earliest monuments of the literary language belong to the 9th and 10th Centuries A.D.

In Kannada, there is a dichotomy between the literary dialects or the so-called educated speech, which is essentially uniform, and colloquial Kannada, in which three social dialects are recognizable: Brahmin, non-Brahmin and Harijan. Apart from this, there are three major regional dialects: Dharwar, Bangalore and Mangalore.

To the South of the Kannada territory, on the West coast of India. live the Tuluvas, speaking Tuḷu (about 800,000). The language has obvious affinities with Kannada (the Tuḷu alphabet is also based on that of Kannada). There is no developed written literature in Tuḷu.

Telugu is the official language of the state of Andhra, but may be heard also beyond Andhra frontiers, in the city of Madras, in Mysore, and in some South East Asian countries. It is spoken by about 40,000,000. The oldest Telugu inscription dates from A.D. 633. The first writer belongs to the 11th Century. Just like the other great literary languages of South India, Telugu has a dichotomy between the written language based on the usage of the *kavitraya* (the three classical poets of Āndhramahābhārata), Śrīnātha and partly Peddana, and a sort of colloquial standard, the dialect of cultured middle class of Central Andhra. There is a number of sharply distinct local and regional dialects, chief among them the dialects of Telangana, Nellore-cum-Chittoor, Viśākhapatnam, Ganjam and Ralayaseema. There is also a distinction between the Brahmin, non-Brahmin and Harijan Telugu speech.

In the Northern part of Andhra live two Dravidian-speaking tribes: the speakers of Kolami (42,000) and Naiki (about 1000). In the district of Bastar (Madhya Pradesh) Parji is spoken by some 20,000 speakers, and in South Bastar, Dorli has been discovered recently. The Koraput district of Orissa has yielded a number of non-literary Dravidian languages: nearly 6000 people speak Konda, in Koraput and the adjacent parts of Andhra some 2000 Gadbas speak two closely related dialects, Ollari and Poya in Salur). Savara and Koya are also spoken in Koraput. The Khond tribes of Orissa (some 600,000 people) speak the two closely related languages of Kui and Kuvi. On the vast territories of Madhya Pradesh and in some adjoining districts many groups of Gonds (nearly 2,000,000 of people) speak a number of dialects of Gondi, some of them only badly recorded and inadequately described.

Still more to the North, in the districts of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, we meet with the speakers of Kurukh (Oraon), about 650 thousand in number, and near the borders of Bihar and West Bengal, 24,000 people speak Malto, closely relatedly to Kurukh.

The only Dravidian language spoken entirely outside India is Brahui. Out of the 225,000 Brahuis inhabiting the Qalat, Hairpur and Hyderabad districts of West Pakistan, only about 200,000 speak Brahui as their mother tongue. Brahui has undergone profound changes owing to Iranian and Indo-Aryan influences. According to unconfirmed reports, yet 40,000 Brahuis have recently been discovered in South Afghanistan.

The Dravidian languages, with about 120,000,000 of speakers, con-

stitute one of the largest linguistic families of the world; and because of the many exciting problems connected with them they also belong to those linguistic groups which will undoubtedly draw the interest and attention of linguistic science of the future.

The disintegration of the Proto-Dravidian parent languages (already in PDr there must have existed distinct dialectal differences) and the separation of South Dravidian seems to have taken place well before the 15th century B.C. The separation of the Telugu (-Tuḷu) and allied dialects (the division into the *Āndhra* and *Drāviḍa* groups of ancient grammarians) might have taken place between the 9th-6th Centuries B.C. Before the 5th Century, PSDr was probably still a more or less uniform speech though with at least two strongly marked dialects; they were the Proto-Kannada, developing later into Kannada (with Baḍaga) and Koḍagu, with some relation to Kota and possibly Toda, yet to be established in detail, and Proto-Tamil, developing later into Old Tamil and possibly Toda, and still much later, during the Early Middle Tamil period (roughly 5th-10th Century) into Malayalam.

At the end of this early period, probably sometime in the 3rd-4th Century B.C., the final split of Proto-Tamil and Proto-Kannada probably occurred. As far as Toda is concerned, it seems that the pre-Toda speakers separated from the pre-Tamil speakers at the close of this period.

During the immediately following age, the development began of Proto-Tamil into pre-Tamil and finally Old Tamil, our first recorded stage of any Dravidian language. The final stage of the process of Kannada-Tamil split, and the Old Tamil literature were accompanied by conscious efforts of grammarians (*Agastyam, Tolkappiyam) and a body of poets and connoisseurs to set up a norm of standard literary Tamil language, the so-called *centamil*, the *ceyyuḷ*. At the same time, however, the colloquial speech (*valakku*) developed according to its own lines and from time to time found entrance into literature and inscriptions. It seems that we have to distinguish, for this very early period itself, at least three forms of Tamil: first, the written language of literature, the earliest texts of which seem to have been some poems occurring in the *Puranānūru* and *Kuruntokai* collections of the so-called Sangam anthologies, and the brilliant descriptive grammar known as *Tolkāppiyam;* second, the language of the inscriptions: the earliest data about epigraphic Tamil may be gathered from the curious hybrid language of short Brāhmī epigraphs, from the graffiti on Arikamedu ware, and, finally, from the earliest inscriptions in Tamil "proper" (the *Tirunātarkunra* and *Paḷḷankoyil* inscriptions from *circa* A.D. 400 and 550 respectively); finally, the informal day-to-day speech of the people, which

may be recognized from occasional dialectisms and colloquialisms in the literary as well as epigraphical monuments.

A new splitting into regional dialects as well as the preservation of old dialectal variations may be observed at the same time, and is responsible for such developments as the origin of Malayalam. The separation of Tamil and Malayalam was brought to an end by the 13th-14th Century A.D. and that event, too, was canonized in grammars—in *Nannūl* and *Līlātilakam* for Tamil and Malayalam respectively.[3]

II. Linguistic Prehistory

Murray B. Emeneau and Thomas Burrow are two Sanskrit scholars who have written about the influence of Dravidian on Indo-Aryan, and of Indo-Aryan on Dravidian. They have collaborated in the publication of *A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961. In the following extract from a paper read before the American Philosophical Society, Professor EMENEAU states some of the reasons for the comparatively less research undertaken in the field of Dravidian Linguistics, *Linguistic Pre-history of India*, reprinted in *Tamil Culture*, Vol. V, 1956, pages 35 to 39.

WHENEVER TWO LANGUAGE communities come in contact and remain in contact for any appreciably long period, the languages have some effect upon each other's structure. Borrowing of words in one or the other direction or in both is the most obvious effect. But there may also be a shift of sound systems, borrowing of derivational or inflectional morphemes, or borrowing of syntactical traits.

Sanskrit scholarship in the West soon saw that some of the non-Indo-European features of Sanskrit were Dravidian (or possibly Munda) in type. The retroflex (domal or cerebral) consonants in

[3] As to the chronology of the disintegration of PDr and the successive stages of Dravidian, cf. an interesting article by M. Andronov, Lexicostatistic Analysis of the Chronology of Disintegration of Proto-Dravidian, IIJ VII. 1964, 2/3, pp. 170-186. According to Andronov, the beginnings of the disintegration of PDr are to be sought in the separation of Brahui which seems to have taken place "in the very beginning of the 4th Millenium B.C.". The SDr unity broke according to him between the 10th-9th Century B.C. into Telugu (-Tuḷu and Kannada-Tamil. But the latter group was "remarkably long-lived and disintegrated only in the beginning of the Christian era (3-4 Century A.D.)". With regard to lexicostatistic methods as such cf. a very sound criticism offered by Karl V. Teeter, Lexicostatistics and Genetic Relationship, Lg. 39, 4, 1963. p. 638 ff.

Sanskrit may be explained for some of their occurrences as being the reflexes of Indo-European consonant clusters of certain types. The fact, however, that the later in Indo-Aryan linguistic history we go, the greater is the incidence of retroflex consonants, and the further fact that most of the Dravidian languages and Proto-Dravidian itself have this type of consonant in abundance (the case is not so clear for Munda, but is in all probability similar), can only lead to the conclusion that the later Indo-Aryan developments are due to a borrowing of indigenous speech habits through bilingualism, and to the well-grounded suspicion that even the early development of retroflexes from certain Indo-European consonant clusters results from the same historic cause.[1] The same argument applies also to the development of absolutives (otherwise called gerunds) in Sanskrit; this non-finite verb form and its syntactic use are so closely parallel to a feature of Dravidian and so unlike what is found in the other old Indo-European languages that we must certainly posit Dravidian influence here.[2]

Prima facie, it should have been easy to examine the Sanskrit dictionary for possible borrowings from Dravidian. There were, however, several blocking factors. First and perhaps most important was the assumption, usually but not always only implicitly made and seldom argued or supported by evidence, that the Sanskrit-speaking invaders of Northwest India were people of a high, or better, a virile, culture, who found in India only culturally feeble barbarians, and that consequently the borrowings that patently took place from Sanskrit and later Indo-Aryan languages into Dravidian were necessarily the only borrowings that could have occurred. Indian civilization itself, with its enthronement of Sanskrit at the expense of other languages, taught Western scholars to think this way about Sanskrit. Moreover, the early days of Indo-European scholarship were with out benefit of the spectacular archaeological discoveries that were later to be made in the Mediterranean area, Mesopotamia, and the Indus Valley. It was but natural to operate with the hidden, but anachronistic, assumption that the earliest speakers of Indo-European languages were like the classical Greeks or Romans—prosperous,

[1] This doctrine is held by, *e.g.*, Bloch, Jules, Sanskrit et dravidien, *Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 25: 1-21, esp. 4-6, 1925; Some problems of Indo-Aryan philology, *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 731-733, 1930; *L'Indoarryen du Veda aux temps modernes,* 53 ff., 325, Paris, 1934; Katre, S. M., *Some problems of historical linguistics in Indo-Aryan,* 135 ff., Bombay, 1944; Prokosch, E., *A comparative Germanic grammar,* 39 Philadelphia, 1939; Wackernagel, Jakob, *Altindische Grammatik* 1: 165, § 144 (a) Anm., Göttingen, 1896, with earlier bibliography, Gundert in 1889, *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 23: 517 ff., having apparently the earliest suggestion.

[2] *Cf.* Bloch, *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 733-735, 1930.

urbanized bearers of a high civilization destined in its later phases to conquer all Europe and then a great part of the earth—rather than to recognize them for what they doubtless were—nomadic, barbarous looters and cattle-rustlers whose fate it was through the centuries to disrupt older civilizations but to be civilized by them. This was in all probability the event in India as it was in Greece or in the late Roman Empire.[3]

This assumption led in the long run to another block—the methodological tendency of the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century to attempt to find Indo-European etymologies for the greatest possible portion of the vocabularies of the Indo-European languages (see also note 3), even though the object could only be achieved by flights of phonological and semantic fancy. Latin perhaps was the greatest sufferer from this urge,[4] but none of the languages was exempt, and Sanskrit was no exception. It was the less pardonable in dealing with a language spoken and written in India, where even casual inspection of the Dravidian languages would have suggested some borrowings, at least, from Dravidian into Sanskrit.[5]

The third blocking factor has been for long the general ignorance of and indifference to the Dravidian languages, even among professed Indological linguistic scholars. They must not, of course, be judged too harshly. The Dravidian languages are not easy, most of them are languages spoken by backwoods "primitives" and are badly reported, the four literary languages have enormous literatures; *ars (et scientia) longa, vita brevis.*

Finally, a fourth blocking factor has been the general caution of Indo-European scholars when confronted with a substratum situa-

[3] Mingled with this essentially Europe-centered attitude was that other strand in late, eighteenth century thinking, the "romantic" one stressed by Mayrhofer, Manfred, *Saeculum* 2: 54 ff., 1951. It led to Sanskrit being regarded (to use Mayrhofer's phrase) as "die ur-ste aller Ursprachen," as an exemplar of purity and freedom from all non-Indo-European influence. The Indo-European savages, in short, were the noblest of all noble savages. But this, of course, is ethnocentrism all over again.

[4] *Cf.* Lane, George S., *Lang.* 25: 335-337, 1949.

[5] The borrowings from the vernacular Middle Indo-Aryan into Sanskrit, when the latter became, as it early did, a hieratic and then a dead language in which speakers of Middle Indo-Aryan languages composed freely, form another portion of the Sanskrit lexicon which must be identified and not subjected to fantastic Indo-European etymologizing. Paul Tedesco has made many notable contributions here, but he also is willing to operate with a methodology in which the Dravidian languages do not exist except as borrowers from Indo-Aryan. One example of this is his treatment of words for "belly, stomach" in Sanskrit piṭaka-"basket," *Archaeologica orientalia in memoriam Ernst Herzfeld* 218, Locust Valley, N.Y., 1952. Whatever may be the etymology of Br. piḍ

tion. In this they were justified, for apart from Basque, the substrata that have been operated with in the study of the history of European languages have been languages that are fragmentarily recorded and badly known (e.g. Gaulish Celtic), not really on record (e.g. Illyrian), or not understood (e.g. Etruscan). In the case of Sanskrit, however, the Dravidian substratum is easily accessible in its dozen or more living languages and in that a Proto-Dravidian can be worked out, given enough scholars interested in the matter.

The end result of the block, however, was that very few scholars attempted to identify borrowings from Dravidian into Sanskrit; those who were interested worked unmethodically and without establishing criteria for recognition of probable, possible, and unlikely examples, and their results were universally ignored. The Sanskrit etymological dictionary of Uhlenbeck (1898-1899)[6] and the Indo-European etymological dictionary of Walde and Pokorny (1930-1932)[7] completely ignore the work of Gundert (1869),[8] Kittel (1872, 1894),[9] and Caldwell (1856, 1875).[10]

More recent work by Jules Bloch (1925, 1930, 1934)[11] attempted to salvage some items from the early attempts, and in the 40's. T. Burrow in an important series of articles (1945, 1946, 1948)[12] attempt-

"belly, stomach" (so with Bray, rather than p[h]īḍ with *Linguistic Survey of India*), the Go. pīr id. is rather to be interpreted as going with Te. pegu, pregu "entrail, gut, bowel" than as borrowed from an Indo-Aryan *peṭṭa-. More striking is the Sanskrit word mālā- "garland, wreath," which can be provided with an Indo-Aryan etymology only with the utmost ingenuity (*Jour. Amer. Orient. Soc.* 67: 85 ff., 1947). The "rope" meanings in modern Indic vernaculars may belong to homonyms, to be etymologized as Tedesco does.

[6] Uhlenbeck, C. C., *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch der altindischen Sprache*, Amsterdam, 1898-1899. He mentions non-Sanskritic languages, though without any detail, s.vv. drāviḍī, pālī. Mayrhofer has apparently found several more such instances; *Saeculum* 2; 55, 1951: "verzeichnet kaum fünf Wörter einheimischer Abkunft."

[7] Walde, Alois, and Julius Pokorny, *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der indogermanischen Sprachen*, 3 v., Berlin, 1930-1932.

[8] Gundert, H. *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 23: 517-530, 1869.

[9] Kittel, F., *Indian Antiquary* 1: 235-239, 1872; *A Kannaḍa-English dictionary*, xiv-xlv, Mangalore, 1894.

[10] Caldwell, Robert, *Comparative grammar of the Dravidian languages*, 565-579, 2nd ed., 1875. I have no access to the 1st ed. of 1856.

[11] Bloch, Jules, Sanskrit et dravidien, *Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 25: 1-21, 1925; Some problems of Indo-Aryan philology: II. Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5; 730-744, 1930; *L'Indo-aryen du Veda aux temps modernes*, 322-328, Paris, 1934.

[12] Burrow, T., Some Dravidian words in Sanskrit, *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1945: 79-120; Loan words in Sanskrit, *ibid.* 1946: 1-30; Dravidian studies VII: Further Dravidian words in Sanskrit, *Bull. School Orient. and African Stud.* 12: 365-396, 1948.

ed to set up methodological principles and suggested Dravidian sources for some five hundred Sanskrit words. Collaborative work by Burrow and myself on a Dravidian etymological dictionary will add more items. The Sanskrit etymological dictionary that Manfred Mayrhofer has just begun to publish in Germany (1953)[13] takes account of this recent work.

III. *Dravidian Words in Sanskrit*

Dravidian loan words in Sanskrit as well as the influence of Dravidian on Indo-Aryan is a specialised field of language research. Prof. THOMAS BURROW, Boden Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Oxford, in his book, *The Sanskrit Language*, Faber and Faber, London, 1959, has an interesting chapter entitled *Non-Aryan influence on Sanskrit.*

In the following reading which is taken from one of his public lectures published in *Indo Asian Culture*, Professor Burrow fixes the periods when the Sanskrit speakers were subject to Dravidian influence. *Indo-Asian Culture*, April, 1960, pages 336 to 341.

THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE of various pre-Aryan peoples *vis-á-vis* the Indo-Aryans may be expected to be reflected in the degree of influence exercised on the Indo-Aryan language. From this point of view, it can be stated with little hesitation that Dravidian rates very high in this respect. The number of loan-words in classical Sanskrit from this source is very considerable. In comparison, the demonstrable influence of the Austro-Asiatic Kol or Munda languages seems to be comparatively small. There is a difficulty in this matter consisting in the fact that only a small number of languages belonging to the latter group have been investigated, and that their serious comparative study has not yet begun, as it cannot until adequate material is available. Nevertheless, even when allowance is made for this, it seems quite impossible that these languages can have exercised anything like the same degree of influence on Sanskrit as Dravidian. This, being the case, one would be inclined to believe that in the North Indian areas occupied by Indo-Aryan the Dravidian had formed a more prominent part of the population than the Mundas.

Another important matter to be considered is the period at which

[13] Mayrhofer, Manfred, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen,* 1 und 2. Lieferung, Heidelberg, Carl Winter, 1953, 1954.

most of these Dravidian loans into Sanskrit took place. In the Vedic literature they are comparatively few, although a number of them have been pointed out, and, consequently, we know that even at this early period the Aryans must have been in contact with Dravidians. Also the Vedic language was the possession of the sacerdotal class, and they zealously guarded its purity against the influence of *mleccha* languages and against the corruptions of the popular speech. Consequently, there was likely to be considerable time-lag between the words becoming current in Indo-Aryan and their being admitted into the sacred language. It is therefore likely that many such words were in use considerably earlier than they appear in literature.

Coming next to the epic literature, we find that the bulk of the Dravidian words which have been accepted into Sanskrit are well established by this time. The epics in their final form are perhaps not very early, but the tradition they embody, including style and language, goes back a considerable time. Furthermore, these same words, which appear in the epics for the first time, turn up also to a large extent in the early Pali texts, and this certainly takes them back well before the Christian era. In view of these considerations, we may fix the period when Dravidian influence on Sanskrit was most strongly exercised as the late Vedic and early classical period. As regards the later history of Sanskrit, it is true that new words from various sources continue to appear in the centuries following, but the interesting thing is that very few of these appear to be Dravidian. Proceeding to Prakrit, the influx of new words is again abundant, but the percentage which can be found a Dravidian origin is comparatively small (a useful list of these was compiled by K. Amrita Row and published in *Indian Antiquary*, XLVI, pp. 33 ff.). Again, in modern Indo-Aryan there is a significant access of new words, but (leaving out the special case of Marathi) whatever the origin of this vocabulary, it is clearly not Dravidian.

Certain conclusions follow inevitably from these facts. It is not possible to account for these Dravidian words in Sanskrit on the theory that the source was the existing Dravidian languages of South India. This is impossible, because the period when the bulk of these words must have been acquired preceded that of any extensive contact between Aryan and South Dravidian. This begins in the Maurya period or, at the earliest, in the Nanda period, but it is not until the Āndhra period that we get any close connection between a section of the Aryans and the South Dravidians. It is possible that a few Dravidian words may have gained currency in this way, but as far as the origin of the majority of them is concerned, it is definitely ruled out.

We are therefore driven to the conclusion that the Dravidian which exercised the main influence on Sanskrit was a Northern Dravidian. There is no difficulty in this assumption, since certain islands of Dravidian still exist in the North. These are Kurukh and Malto, and in the far west, the Brahui of Baluchistan. Of course Dravidian on such a small scale, as it exists now in the North, could not have exercised any serious influence. So we must conclude that Dravidian was at one time extensively current in the North and very likely also (in order to account for its influence on Sanskrit) that it had been current in some of the main areas of Aryan settlement.

A consideration of the type of words adopted by Indo-Aryan leads to certain conclusions. We have on the one hand, for instance, such words as the names of Indian trees for which the Indo-Aryans cannot have had any words to begin with, and some of which one would therefore expect to find borrowed from Dravidian. Such are *ketaka* (*pandanus odoratissimus*), *tāla* (palmyra palm), and so forth. But in addition to these, we find a considerable number which are 'unnecessary', inasmuch as Indo-Aryan was perfectly well supplied with words having these meanings already. Such are the above mentioned *nīra* (Aryan : *udaka, āpas*) and *mīna* (Aryan : *matsya*). Similar cases are *kānana,* forest (Aryan : *vana*): *kāca,* carrying yoke (Aryan : *vīvadha*); *kuntala,* hair (Aryan : *keśa*); and so forth. It is difficult to see how such words could have become current in Sanskrit, unless at one period there was a considerable amount of bilingualism in North India. The unnecessary adoption of, for example, Dravidian *nīra* is reminiscent of the Anglo-Indian slang in which, for instance, 'pawny' would commonly be substituted for the English word 'water'. Such usage was particularly common among the lower ranks of the army and corresponding grades elsewhere, but largely avoided in official English speaking and writing in India. Much the same was obviously the case in the later Vedic period in India. The official language consciously avoided the use of *mleccha* terms, though not with complete success, since they were not always detected. On the other hand, they must have had considerable currency in the language of the lower classes during the bilingual period. In course of time, a considerable number were elevated to the status of literary words, and as such we meet them in the epics.

Another point that would be worth special investigation is these loan-words in modern Indo-Aryan. It is interesting to note that such words as *kānana, kuntala, mīna, nīra* are not preserved in modern Indo-Aryan, which preserved only the words of Indo-Aryan origin (Hindi : *ban, keś, machlī*) or in the last instance, where there is excessive reduction in Prakrit (*uaa*), by a new Indo-Aryan forma-

tion. The same applies to many other presumable loan-words as well as to the Dravidian. For instance, beside the Indo-Aryan *hastin* (elephant), there is a whole list of synonyms—*gaja*, *kuñjara*, *mātanga*, *nāga*, etc—which may very well have their origin in unknown pre-Aryan languages. Of all these words, however, it is the Indo-Aryan *hastin* which has maintained itself in the modern languages (Hindi : *hāthī*).

The comparative cessation of the accession of Dravidian words to the Indo-Aryan vocabulary is an indication that the extensively spoken Dravidian of North India, from which the major part of the Dravidian element in Sanskrit was derived, had by that time been generally replaced by Indo-Aryan. Of course, as mentioned above, there remain islands of Dravidian in the North to this day, and presumably, as we go backwards in time these will have been more numerous; but such remnants would never have the power seriously to affect Indo-Aryan, and that, as we have seen, was the case. It is also significant, during this later period, that the Southern Dravidian languages do not exert any major influence on Indo-Aryan, from which it is evident that they cannot have done so during the earlier period when contact between these Dravidians and the Indo-Aryans was very slight. We are left therefore with only one possible assumption, namely, of an extensive occupation by Dravidian speakers of some of the primary areas of Aryan settlement.

IV. Dravidian and Ural-Altaic

Prof. THOMAS BURROW has also revived the theory that the Dravidian Languages are related to the Ural-Altaic languages. In one of his *Dravidian Studies* published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* he examines the 'body' in Dravidian and Uralian. In the introductory portion of the article, he traces the history of this theory. The reading is from *Dravidian Studies,* VI, BOSAS, Vol. XI, 1943-46, pages 328 to 331.

BISHOP CALDWELL, THE founder of the comparative study of the Dravidian languages, was interested not only in the relationship of those languages among themselves, but also in the question of their connection with other families of languages outside India. His investigations in this direction led him to believe that the Dravidian languages are connected with what he called the "Scythian" family of languages. By the term "Scythian" Caldwell referred mainly to the Ural-Altaic languages, though oc-

casionally using the word in a rather wider sense than that. Within the "Scythian" family he held that it was possible to define the position of Dravidian even more closely, by attaching it to the Finno-ugrian group in particular.[1] The evidence which Caldwell offered in support of this theory consisted partly of grammatical features which he held to be common to the languages concerned, and partly of comparisons of vocabulary. The former are to be found scattered through the body of his work, and the latter are collected together in an appendix entitled "Glossarial Affinities".[2] In presenting this theory Caldwell was quite modest in his claims; he admitted the possibility of being misled by accidental assonances, and claimed rather to have pointed the way to the possibilities of future research than to have demonstrated the relationship with any finality.

Caldwell was not alone in propounding this theory. Similar conclusions were reached by Max Müller, who used the term "Turanian" in the sense Caldwell used "Scythian".[3] Among others who came out in support of this theory mention may be made of C. Schoebel, who defended it at the First International Congress of Orientalists in a paper entitled "Affinités des langues Dravidiennes et des langues Ouralo-altaïques".[4]

Though enjoying considerable popularity for a time, Caldwell's doctrine was eventually either ignored or rejected by philologists. It is worth while examining the reasons advanced at the time for this rejection. They are to be found most lucidly and ably expressed in a paper read by P. Hunfalvy at the Second International Congress of Orientalists entitled "On the Study of the Turanian Languages".[5] His main criticism is against the vagueness of the methods used, particularly by Max Müller in classifying the "Turanian" languages. He objects with justice to the latter's statement that "the very absence of family likeness constitutes one of the distinguishing features of the Turanian dialects",[6] and proceeds to show that in the case of the Finno-ugrian languages at any rate

[1] Caldwell,[3] p. 68. "The Scythian family to which, on the whole, the Dravidian languages may be regarded as most nearly allied, is the Finnish or Urian. . . ."

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 610-624.

[3] *Letter on the Classification of the Turanian Languages*, published in Bunsen's *Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History*, vol. i, pp. 263-521. London, 1854. Caldwell's first edition was published in 1856, but his work was independent of Max Müller's and vice versa.

[4] *Compte rendu de la première session*, ii, pp. 348 ff. Paris, 1873.

[5] *Transactions of the Second Session of the International Congress of Orientalists*, pp. 64-97, London, 1874.

[6] Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, i, p. 334.

this was the reverse of true, and that in their case the same detailed etymological correspondences, the same regular sound-changes, and so forth could be demonstrated as were already familiar from Indo-European. Such detailed and indisputable relationships had not, he maintained, been yet shown to exist between Finno-ugrian and the other members assigned to the "Turanian" group, and that until this had been done the question of their relationship must be regarded as unproved. Where Dravidian was concerned he had no difficulty in pointing out certain elementary mistakes which Caldwell and Max Müller had made owing to their lack of specialist knowledge of the Finno-ugrian languages. For the rest of the evidence, where such objections could not be offered, he held that there was not sufficient of it to justify the conclusions based on it. In his own words: "These numerous dialects form several distinct families, each of which has its own nucleus which must be treated like the Finno-ugric family. The further question, whether those different nuclei point to one common nucleus, cannot be answered in the present state of the knowledge of them we possess. The Turkish and Samojedian languages, which are geographically nearest to the Finno-ugric family, constitute two different nuclei, which cannot be included in the Finno-ugric one.... The Dravidian languages have their source likewise in a different nucleus."[7]

Hunfalvy's objections were shared by his fellow-workers in the Finno-ugrian field, and from that time the question of Dravidian relationship has been to all intents and purposes ignored. The general attitude was expressed by O. Donner : "Die von Rask und Max Müller geschaffene einheit der nordasiatischen sprachen mit den dravidischen wird wohl jetzt überall als eine geistreiche hypothese betrachtet. . . ."[8] The theory was not disproved, it was merely regarded as unproven unless further evidence were forthcoming. The subject was, however, taken up by no one for half a century after Caldwell, naturally enough, since from that time hardly anybody studied the Dravidian languages at all. The few people who paid any attention to Dravidan showed no inclination to follow Caldwell in this matter and while the question seems never to have been re-examined by any scholar, in general scepticism prevailed. In the *Linguistic Survey of India*[9] Sten Konow remarks : "With regard to the Dravidian languages the attempt to connect them with other linguistic families outside India is now generally recognized as a failure, and we must still consider them as an isolated family."

[7] *Loc. cit.*, p. 89.

[8] *Atti del IV Congresso Internazionale degli Orientalisti tenuto in Firenze nel settmbre* 1878. Tom. ii, p. 231. Firenze, 1881,

[9] Vol. iv, p. 282 (1906).

It was not until 1925 that any further attempt was made to develop the thesis propounded by Caldwell. This was an article by F. O. Schrader entitled "Dravidisch and Uralisch".[10] In returning to Caldwell's theory Schrader considerably simplified its terms of reference, in as much as he left out of account all question of relationship with the Altaic languages and others included by Caldwell under the term "Scythian", and confined himself to a comparison of the Dravidian languages on the one hand and the Uralian languages, i.e. Finno-ugrian and Samoyede on the other. As to the exact nature of the relationship of the two groups of languages he did not take up a very clear position as is clear from his own words: "Ich will zu zeigen versuchen, das zwischen der dravidischen Familie einerseits und der uralischen, d.h. der finnisch-ugrisch-samojedischen, anderseits ein historischer Zusammenhang besteht, der wenn nicht als Urverwandtschaft so durch vorgeschichtliche Nachbarschaft und sehr intime einseitige oder gegenseitige Beeinflussung erklärt werden muss."[11]

Schrader bases his argument on phonetic structure, word formation, and correspondences in grammar and vocabulary. In presenting this material he adds considerably to the somewhat slender evidence produced by Caldwell, and, as might be expected from the advances in linguistic science in the intervening period, the material is on the whole more reliable. This does not mean that the percentage of error is negligible; on the contrary it is quite easy to pick out false equations page by page. Nevertheless, even allowing for all this, there remains enough material against which no obvious objections can be raised, to make the subject worthy of renewed serious attention.

In effect little notice was taken of Schrader's article. His line of argument was attacked by E. Lewy,[12] who maintained that all the facts adduced by him could be explained by the normal workings of chance and that an equal number of correspondences could be found between any two unrelated languages or language-groups in the world. In support of this Lewy produced a list of sixty Kechuan words similar in form and meaning to sixty Finnish words which he placed beside them. The answer to this argument is that the correspondences in vocabulary between Dravidian and Uralian are far more numerous than the list of sixty which Schrader had given and Lewy parodied. It is possible to produce a longer list of words deal-

[10] *Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik*, iii, pp. 81-112.

[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

[12] In the course of a review of W. Schmidt's *Sprachfamilien und Sprachenkreise der Erde* in *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, lvi (128), pp. 142-159.

ing with the body and its parts alone, as is done below. It would not be possible to produce between any two languages the same amount of detailed comparisons as can be made between Dravidian and Uralian without giving reason to believe that those languages were themselves related. Because however Schrader's article contained only a fraction of the available material, it was possible for Lewy to use this method with some plausibility, and his arguments seem to have had considerable effect, since no further notice was taken of Schrader's article from the Finno-ugrian side.

A work published shortly afterwards by W. von Hevesy purporting to prove that the Muṇḍā or Kolarian languages of India are related to Finno-ugrian, is deserving only of being passed over in silence.[13] Unfortunately it seems to have impressed Schrader, a fact which tends to throw doubt on his own competence to deal with the matter. In consequence we find him returning to the subject with an article entitled *On the "Uralian" element in the Drāviḍa and Muṇḍā Languages,*[14] in which he attempts to reconcile his own doctrines with those of Hevesy. They cannot, of course, be reconciled if it assumed that Dravidian and Uralian are related languages in the proper sense of the term, i.e. descended from the same original language, since the Dravidian and Kolarian languages are obviously unrelated. Schrader had, however, in the first place been undecided whether to assume genetic relationship or prehistoric mutual influence, and now influenced by Hevesy, he is inclined to believe that the latter theory can be applied to both groups of languages. This leads him to some implausible theorizing about two different streams of "Uralians" having entered India and influenced the one the Dravidian and the other the Kolarian languages before presumably their own languages died out. This and the alternative theories he offers[15] do not carry much conviction, nor is there any reason why the common material of Dravidian and Uralian should not be explained by the theory of genetic relationship, while the evidence for a relationship between Uralian and Kolarian is easily seen on examination to be illusory.

In returning to the subject in this paper Schrader adds somewhat to his material by giving a list of words denoting parts of the body which he regards as common to Dravidian and Uralian. This list contains seventy items, out of which between a quarter and a third constitute acceptable equations. In view of the large percentage of error in this list, it is unlikely to create much impression

[13] *Finnisch-ugrisches aus Indien,* Wien, 1932. See the review by R. L. Turner, *JRAS.,* 1934, pp. 799 ff.

[14] *BSOS.,* VIII., 751-762.

[15] *Op. cit.,* p. 762.

on the reader without considerable improvement. Consequently I propose to take up the subject where Schrader left it and as a first instalment of evidence supporting the theory of Dravidian-Uralian relationship present the following list of etymologies of words applying to the body and its parts. A thoroughgoing correspondence between the two groups of languages emerges quite clearly in this respect, a correspondence which is particularly valuable since this part of the vocabulary is classed among the most primitive and essential elements of language. For the time being the list may be left to speak for itself, though here and there phonetic developments are briefly discussed. For the rest details of phonology and other questions that arise are reserved for further contributions to this series.

V. Controversy about Words

As an example of controversy that centres around words and their derivation, the following extracts are given, from a paper published in *Tamil Culture,* Vol. IX, 1961, pp. 296 to 299. The author, V. I. SUBRAMONIAM, Professor of Linguistics, University of Kerala, refutes statements made by Professor Paul Thieme in a review of Professor Thomas Burrow's book, *The Sanskrit Language.*

I CANNOT CLOSE this paper without referring the readers to a recent and interesting review of Burrow's book[1] by Paul Thieme published in *Language,* Vol. 31 p. 438. Thieme with unshaken faith in the purity of the Sanskrit Language has given expression to some of his ideas in the form of a refutation to Burrow's statements. He says, "There are no documents in Dravidian which can be dated back to the pre-Christian Era." This statement does not take into consideration the recent findings in Epigraphy in Tamil, and the author depends on the opinions about the date of Tamil literature of certain Western Scholars who had no first hand information about Tamil. The Arikkamedu inscriptions in Tamil are dated by Epigraphists to the pre-Christian Era. On the same type of evidence as is used to date the Rig Veda, Ancient Tamil literature can also be dated to this ancient period.

Thieme states, "We have not even evidence for speech contact with Dravidian speakers in olden times. This can of course be inferred from the loan words themselves. But loan words themselves

[1] *The Sanskrit Language,* Faber and Faber, London, 1959.

are possible only after the contact. So it is circular." Thieme assumes here that everything that has happened in the past in India is recorded in early Sanskrit. The Hellenic conquest of India is a known and proved fact. Thieme can never find one direct reference to this contact in the whole of Sanskrit literary tradition. Are we to doubt this conquest ? Rig Veda refers to Dasyus and Demons as the enemies of Aryans. If they are the non-Aryan tribes, will not that be a sufficient proof that Aryans had contact with non-Aryans?

Thieme says that, "Dravidian languages bristle with Sanskrit loan words and Dravidian literature came into existence under the influence of Sanskrit." Both the statements are far from the truth. Sanskrit loan words do not constitute even 10 per cent of the vocabulary of ancient Tamil. To quote Emeneau, "Only literary criticism and grammatical treatises were influenced by Sanskrit." It is a well known fact that both these branches of literature except Tolkāppiyam came into existence in Tamil later than the secular poetic compositions collected under the name, Sangam poetry.

Thieme states that, "Wherever there is a correspondence in the vocabularies of Sanskrit and Dravidian, there is a presumption to be removed only by specific arguments that Sanskrit has been the lender, Dravidian the borrower." Why it should be so, Thieme does not care to explain. Probably, he is still sharing the view that the Dravidians were less civilized than the Aryans and therefore the borrowing should be from the more cultured by the less cultured. The Mohanjo-daro Civilization and its identification as non-Aryan and then as Dravidian, disprove, Thieme's supposition. This argument of his reflects the 19th century notion pointed out in the beginning of this paper and effectively refuted by Emeneau.

Thieme's observation that the Mohanjo-daro civilization is not Dravidian needs more proof than a mere repetition of the unfounded scepticism voiced by armchair theoreticians. Those who have really worked at the sites have without doubt identified it with the Dravidian Civilization also because of the presence of Brahuii speakers in and around the sites.

"Loan words" Thieme says, "have been shunned by early Sankrit Grammarians". So there is "very little likelihood of making use of these loan words by literary writers". Actually, those which Thieme points out are obvious loan words. Subtle loan words have been accepted and adopted even by the early Grammarians like Katyayna. Aryans have the singular capacity to adapt and absorb into their system, whatever is good in others whether they are friends or foes. This is a cultural feature in existence even now. Their ancient literature and grammar reflect this trait. The most effective way for disproving Burrow would be to discuss the shortcomings of the

seven methodological steps formulated by Emeneau and Burrow. But this has been silently passed over by Thieme for obvious reasons.

Regarding the alternate derivations all except one are fanciful. Thieme says 'ulukhal=mortar' is taken from the language of women. Except for its use by women and a clear determination on the part of Thieme to say somehow that that word is not of Dravidian origin, there is no evidence shown by him for such a statement. He has no parallels to strengthen his argument.

'Khala=thrashing' floor is derived by Thieme from 'akhara=hole'. Neither the significance of the prefix 'a' nor how it has been dropped in 'khala' is explained by him. We are not in the days of Voltaire.

'Mayil=peacock' if Dravidian, then Thieme says that "that language should have an early form 'mayura' or the like to explain the Sanskrit form." Another objection raised by him is the absence of a suffix 'ura' in Tamil. First, he has wrongly assumed that the etymon should have a close phonological resemblance with original form. This need not be and the instances to support my stand are too well known in languages to be mentioned here. The second mistake Thieme has committed is in considering 'ura' as a suffix in Tamil. The borrowed word might have been in its original form a compound, 'mayil—uur'—peacock village. The village in which the peacock was seen would have been the base for 'mayura'. Further, the home of this bird is said to be India and Thieme is bound to explain this factor also when he refutes Burrow's derivation.

'Mukta=pearl' is also refuted by Thieme on two grounds: (1) Prakrit has no form like 'mukka' to correspond to Sanskrit 'mukta'. (2) The meaning 'loosened one' is hardly a denomination that would bring out a characteristic feature of the pearl or its origin. To some extent, Burrow is the cause of this misunderstanding. 'Muttu' in Tamil means 'to ripen', the ripening of water particle. The other Prakrit form 'muttu' fits well with this Tamil form.

Thieme's derivation of *'Sava'* from *'Sa'* meaning swelling on the basis of a statement of the novelist Ernest Hemingway is entertaining. *'Sa'* when it takes past tense in Tamil is *'settan'* but when it takes the future it is *'saavaan'* and not *'sappaan'* as the other verbs in Tamil which take—tt—for past do. On the basis of this pattern deviation, *'saa'* can be considered as a borrowing in Dravidian rather than the other way round.[2]

[2] See my review of M. Raghava Iyengar's 'Vinaittiripu Vilakkam', in *The Hindu*, November 30, 1958.

VI. Language in Ceylon

It seems highly improbable that Ceylon remained isolated from Southern India during the Cankam era. However, literary references to Tamil-speaking groups in Ceylon during this period are not too many.

S. NATESAN has stated some of the linguistic evidence in favour of the early occupation of Ceylon by Tamil speakers in the section contributed to the *University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Part I. The reading is from pages 42 and 43.

TAMIL HAS HAD a long history in Ceylon. The *Mahāvaṁsa* relates that Vijaya married a Pāṇḍya princess from Madhurā, and that she was accompanied by a hundred maidens and a thousand families of guilds who settled down in Ceylon. Coming to historical times, we find that two Tamils, Sena and Guttaka, ruled at Anurādhapura in the latter half of the third century B.C. for a period of about twenty years. The famous Tamil king, Eḷāra, reigned in Ceylon during the next century for a long period covering over forty years. By this time Tamil must have been well-established in Ceylon. Large numbers of Tamil soldiers had already found their way to Ceylon, and Tamil merchants also had begun to engage in trade of different kinds. An inscription of the second century B.C., found in Anurādhapura, mentions a corporation of Tamil merchants, of which the captain of a ship (*navika*) was the head.[1] A Tamil poet from Ceylon is said to have adorned the Tamil Sangam at Madhurā;[2] he may perhaps have lived in the first century B.C., as he appears to be one of the earlier poets of the Sangam Age. It is well known that Jaffna has been a centre of Tamil learning for several centuries. The Ārya-cakravartis of Jaffna, who rose to power in the fourteenth century, were great patrons of Tamil literature.

During the nineteenth century, Jaffna produced some distinguished scholars who took a leading part in the revival of Tamil learning in South India.

The antiquity of Tamil in Ceylon is borne out by the fact that some words of the Sangam period are still in common use among the peasantry of Jaffna, though they have fallen into disuse in South India, the original home of the Tamil language; such words as *aitu* and *atar* are cases in point. Moreover, some usages found in old Tamil which have completely disappeared from popular speech in

[1] Inscription No. 12 from Periya-Puḷiyankulam; *JCBRAS.*, No. 93, pp. 54-55.

[2] Ilattu Pūtan Tevanār. Seven of his poems are included in the Sangam anthologies, *Akanānūru, Kuruntokai and Narrinai.*

South India are still current in Jaffna. The medial demonstrative *u*, which is exemplified in words like *utu* and *uvan*, and the interrogative termination-*e*, occurring in words such as *vantāre*, are now unknown in South India, except among scholars well-versed in Tamil literature. An endearing expression used in addressing a female child as *mahane* (son), which is mentioned in the *Tolkāppiyam*, the grammar of the Śangam age, is met with in ordinary usage among the people of Jaffna.

The Tamils of Jaffna have retained some of the characteristics of old Tamil. The Tamil spoken by them is, to a great extent, free from the admixture of Sanskrit words. In Śangam literature, we find only a small percentage of Sanskrit words, and even in regard to these words, they are used in conformity with some rules of Tamil phonology laid down in the *Tolkāppiyam*, according to which, for instance, the consonant *r* should not be used at the beginning of a word, unless it is preceded by an appropriate vowel. This rule is scrupulously observed even today by the illiterate villagers of Jaffna. Sanskrit words like *ruci* and *raktam*, for instance, are pronounced by them as *urusi* and *irattam*.

VII. Tamil and Sanskrit in South-East Asia

The use of Sanskrit in South-East Asia is no indication of the ethnic origin of those who used it. Sanskrit served as an official language of the courts and of religion, and Tamil speakers and Tamil kings as well as the kings and priests of South-East Asian kingdoms used Sanskrit during what is called the 'Hindu period' of their history.

The following reading is taken from the presidential address of Professor Jean Filliozat published in the *Proceedings of the International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies*, Vol. I, pages 7 to 9, Kuala Lumpur, 1968.

The cultural and commercial intercource between India and South-East Asia across the ocean as well as the propagation of the Buddhist religion and of Indian sciences along the ways of central Asia towards the Far East, have been prominent since nearly twenty centuries. Many archaeological remains, records of travellers, and texts and inscriptions in Indian languages existing in all Eastern Asia are direct testimonies of this fact. Borrowings of Indian words in the languages of this part of the world, and Indian features in the original arts of many countries are also indirect evidence of the same fact.

In the first part of the last century the view was generally accepted among scholars that the main current of Indian culture towards the East had been Buddhistic. It seemed sure Hindu religion, as deriving from the Vedic or brahmanical one, was not a missionary religion and was not exported from India. It was easy in order to support this opinion to quote from Manu or from the other later sources in the literature of the Darmasastras prohibiting sea voyage for brahmins. But in fact, this opinion was wrong. Since the second part of the last century a lot of brahmanical remains and Sanskrit Hindu inscriptions were recorded in South-East Asia and Indonesia. Even literal Vedic quotations appear in Indo-Chinese and Indonesian documents. The only problem which remained till recently was how to reconcile the prohibition of exportation of Vedic lore beyond the seas with the fact of this very exportation, and by whom the Vedic, Brahmanical and Hindu religions were brought and established in South-East Asia?

This last problem is now going to be solved, thanks to Tamil research and to Sanskrit research in Tamil Nad, as well as in the S.-E. Asia itself. At first Tamil research had not been considered as very important in this matter because, in S.-E. Asia, Sanskrit inscriptions referring only to Sanskrit literature are much more numerous than the Tamil ones which also are ordinarily of later dates. So, it seemed the main influence from India towards the East was from Northern India. Tamilians themselves called Sanskrit *vadamoḷi* 'Northern language'. But that does not mean they have not used it. On the contrary, if we draw a complete enquiry into the culture of Tamil Nad as it was all along the centuries, we observe Tamil pulavar not only have produced Tamil masterpieces of poetry and learning, but also have contributed much in Sanskrit to Literature and Philosophy. We have just to refer to the names of such great philosophers of world fame as Sankaracarya or Ramanuja, or to authors like Dandin who were *ubhayakavi.*

Moreover we must observe when Tamilians wrote in Sankrit they were not always nearly following a Northern tradition. Very often they simply used Sanskrit as a language of general communication in order to more widely propagate ideas from their own tradition. Ramanuja, for example, gave a scholastic Sanskrit garment to the theology of Nammalvar who inspired him.

Let us now consider the most ancient of the Sanskrit inscriptions of Indo-China which was found at Vocanh near the eastern coast of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, in Vietnam. According to palaeographical evidence it belongs to the second or third century A.D. The shape of the characters does not clearly indicate if the writing was introduced from South India rather than from any other part of India.

But the contents of the inscription are significant. In spite of the fact the lines are not all well preserved we have the name of the king who ordered to carve out the text. This name is Sri Mara. At the beginning of the study of this inscription, it was thought the king was a Buddhist because he was praising 'compassion', *karuna*. The name 'Mara' also seemed to evolve Buddhism. But it would have been very strange if the king had designated himself as Mara, that is, as an enemy of Buddhism. We know *karuna*, corresponding to the Tamil *arul*, is Brahmanical or Hindu as well as Buddhistic, and the name *Mara* in Sanskrit must now be recognised as merely being a transliteration of the famous Tamil title of Pandyan kings *MaRaN*. Because the letter *R* of Tamil *MaRaN* is lacking in Sanskrit, it was replaced by the other one and so the Tamil word became similar to the name of the Buddha's antagonist who was surely out of consideration there.

The use of the Sanskrit language by Tamilians and the introduction of a famous Tamil royal title under a Sanskrit garment was quite natural at the time, that is, in the first centuries of the Saka era. In this period not only the Dravidian languages were by their very origin different from the Indo-Aryan ones but also they most probably were already highly differentiated from each other. Above all, the Indo-Aryan Prakrits of the North, also in use in the South with the Jain Ardhamagadhi and with the Buddhist Pali were much different from each other. Only Sanskrit was known at least by educated people everywhere and regularly taught in special schools conducted throughout India. It was the only means of general communications as Latin has been during centuries in Europe and as English is today in the greatest part of the world; Sanskrit was used for secular and practical purposes, owing to this character of common language medium. In most of the official inscriptions it replaced the Prakrits and, at the same time the compromise between the old Buddhist Prakrit text and the widespread usage of the classical Sanskrit gave birth to the so-called Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit which was gradually replaced by classical Sanskrit itself.

Chapter Three

LITERATURE

The literature of the Ancient Period consists of anthologies of poems on love and war, composed after the *Toḷkaapiyam,* and before the end of the second century A.D. To this literature which consists of about 34,000 lines, one should add also the *Cillapatikaram* (*The Epic of the Anklet*) and the *Manimeekalai,* a long poem, Buddhist in origin and doctrine. Ancient Tamil Literature offers a surprisingly great deal of information concerning the social life of the Tamils.

I. The Tolkaapiyam

The *Tolkaapiyam,* the earliest work extant in Tamil, belongs to the pre-Christian era and antedates the classical poetry or Cankam (written also Sangam) poetry. M. VARADARAJAN, Professor of Tamil, University of Madras, has written about the *Tolkaapiyam* in his study on *Tamil Literature* contained in the collection of studies on *Indian Literature* edited by Dr. Nagendra, Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Agra, 1959. The reading is from pages 11 to 13.

LITERARY CONVENTIONS ARE found in Tholkappiyam, the earliest extant treatise on grammar. It is dated back to 1000 B.C. It contains 1,276 sutras. Its first part is on Orthography, the second on Morphology and the third on Literary conventions and usages. It is evident that this work was preceded by centuries of literary culture, for it lays down rules for different kinds of compositions deduced from literary works of the best authors whose works had been in existence then and also refers to other grammatical works which are now extinct. We have only names of certain works known to us through the references to them in later works and hence to attempt an account of the pre-Tholkappiyam works, is equal to grouping in the dark. But

for the survival of Tholkappiyam, the existence of literary works in Tamil before 1000 B.C. could not have been believed and it would have been considered as one of the legends gathering round Sangam literature. Now it is asserted that Tholkappiyam is a work written during a period when literary activity in Tamil reached its high watermark.

The first part deals with phonetic rules and different assimilations of sounds in words in a scientific manner. The second part elaborately explains the parts of speech, the formation of simple and compound words and syntax. It is a peculiarity in Tamil that the grammarians have based gender on the signification of words, not on the endings of words. There is no such thing as grammatical gender in Tamil even as early as Tholkappiyam. Modern philologists are of the opinion that Tholkappiyam is an advanced grammatical treatise and their view is based on the study of the first two parts of the work.

The third part, called Porulathikaram, treats of literary conventions, rhetoric, prosody, etc. and is the most important part and reflects such a mature culture as to lead us to infer that the Tamil people should have had a high degree of civilisation for many centuries before such a work could arise. As V. R. R. Dikshitar says, this part gives us a glimpse of the political, social and religious life of the people and the importance of the work is further enhanced by several commentators of great repute. According to Tholkappiyam, the subject-matter for a literary composition may be either Akam, the esoteric treatment of love, or Puram, the exoteric treatment of war and administration and morals.[1] He also deals with sentiments expressed in poetry, rhetoric, prosody, idioms and traditions. Simile is the basis of all the figures of rhetoric, and it is analytically treated in one chapter. The chapter on prosody explains all the metrical devices of the language. The early Tamil literature possesses varied and polished forms of verse which are indigenous and independent of any Sanskrit model. This also proves the existence of an age-long poetic literature in Tamil before 1000 B.C. which enabled the author of the ancient grammar Tholkappiyam to explain in detail the different metres and their rules as deduced from the poetical works of his age. "Dravidian genius", says T. Sesha Iyengar, "was conspicuous not merely in the sphere of language, but also in that of literature. Of all the races of India, the only people who had a poetical literature independent of Sanskrit are the Tamils, a typical Dravidian people."

As convention and system play an essential part in the literary

[1] *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p. 28.

works of the post-Tholkappiyam period, a proper understanding of them requires a basic knowledge of the third part of this great work of grammar.

There are references hère and there in the great commentaries of Sangam literature to other grammatical works called Agatthiyam, Pannirupadalam, Avinayam, Kakkaipadiniyam, Natrattham, etc. The former of these is said to have been written by Agatthiyanar. There are many legends associated with this author and others of the three Sangams or Academies of Tamil literature.

II. Characteristics of Classical Poetry

The following reading is taken from an article by X. S. THANI NAYAGAM, entitled "Ancient Tamil Poetry", published in the *Eastern Horizon*, Hong Kong, Nos. 7 and 8, 1966.

ONE OF THE elements which makes classical Tamil literature such good poetry as well as valuable in the understanding of ancient India is its secular and humanistic inspiration. Here we have poetry which is not ritualistic; here we have poets who are concerned with the passions and emotions of ordinary men and women, not only of kings and queens and the élite groups of society. Here we have bards and poets who have no priestly functions to perform, but nevertheless are the counsellors of kings and the moral leaders of society. A predominantly secular and humanistic literature such as this in a country in which religion and religious literature have dominated society from the dawn of literary history is worth study not only by students of literature, but also by students of history and of culture. . . .

It is worthwhile noting that the chronological period covered by this literature approximates the age when the Sanskrit epics were receiving their final versions in northern India and the Mauryan Empire was producing its work in stone, when the Buddhist sermons were being redacted into the Buddhist canon, when the Chou period was flourishing in China, and Latin literature was having its golden and silver ages. Cicero, Senecca, Virgil, Catullus, Juvenal were contemporaries of the Tamil poets.

The entire tradition of Tamil poesy refers to this period of classical Tamil poetry now extant as the output of a third epoch, preceded by two other epochs of much longer duration and of a great amount of poesy. The first epoch is supposed to have lasted for 4,440 years and counted 4,449 poets; the second epoch is said to have lasted for 3,700 years and counted 3,700 poets, and the third, which produced

this collection, is supposed to have lasted for 1,850 years and counted 449 poets. This gives a total of about ten thousand years before the Christian era, a period too fanciful for belief. The figures for the third epoch seem to be accurate, and there seems to have been an interest in numerology in this computation, which shows the Jain passion for numbers. The number of years seems to be multiples of 37, as 37 x 120, 37 x 100, and 37 x 50. However much this tradition seems to be fanciful, there seems to be a core of historical truth in the relevant accounts which speak of the subsidence of land under the sea as the result of a deluge and cataclysms, and of the existence of a literary academy, membership in which was limited to recognised poets. *The persistent tradition of the existence of a Tamil literary academy is a unique tradition for India, and would tend to show the existence of a normative literary body during the Tamil classical period.*

There is another attractive feature of this classical poetry, namely, that the poems are the compositions of poets and poetesses of all classes of society. Though there is little biographical information concerning these poets besides what may be gleaned from the poems themselves and their names and titles, and the brief colophons added by editors of a later age, their names and designations show that, of the approximately five hundred different persons to whom the poetry is attributed, at least thirty were women. About thirty of the poets were either kings or of royal descent, four of them were queens, while a large number were of the agricultural and merchant classes. There were among them some who practised a craft or other. The list includes astronomers, arithmeticians as well as potters, blacksmiths and carpenters.

We shall see in these pages other characteristics and features of classical Tamil poetry. But the antiquity of this Tamil poetry is not the least of the reasons why it should be known. It is the only language of India which while it shares antiquity with Sanskrit still continues to be a living literary language. Hindi literature did not appear before the 12th century; Bengali literature has its beginnings in the 11th century; Marathi in the 12th century; Punjabi in the 12th century. Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam literature originated after the 8th century. Tamil spans the ancient and the modern periods and deserves notice as a representative language of Indian thought and culture; as the only Indian language which is both classical and modern.

Love Poetry

The love poetry of the classical period in Tamil

collection for Ancient India. Some of this poetry reminds one of the Chinese poetry translated by Arthur Waley, or the *tanka* poems translated from the Japanese. These ancient love poems of the Orient do not seem to state their emotions so openly as comparable Greek or Latin poetry, but prefer to convey their meanings through suggestion and association. There is a certain reserve which poetry expects of lovers in love, partly because, I suppose, no language could approximate with any fairness the intense and complex emotions of persons involved in various love situations, and partly because lovers half reveal and half conceal their innermost thoughts. Here again, the woman in these situations is even less communicative than man, and expresses her thought through half-phrases and innuendos, leaving to her hearers the onus of interpreting her almost undisclosed thoughts. Suggestion, therefore, is a characteristic feature common to the ancient love poetry of the Orient, and the Tamil poets exploit it to a full measure.

Situational Poems

The composition of the love poetry because it is *situational* seems to attempt at good psychological studies of human behaviour, especially of the psychology of women in love. The poet imagines himself to be the man or woman in love, or the companion, or nurse of the beloved, and composes poetry apt for such situations. In this drama, the great and frequent themes are the meetings of lovers, often of persons who become lovers at first sight, their trysts thereafter unknown to their parents, the aiding and abetting which the friend or the nurse gives them, and the physical changes like sallowness and loss of appetite, and the mental anguish which separated lovers experience.

The young man plays the part he has played for centuries, in his role of postponing the day of finally committing himself in marriage before the elders and the public, while the young lady waits with characteristic patience and lives in continued hope that he will not belie his promises.

Love in the post-marital stage, with the happiness which children bring and the hospitality for which marriage invariably offers opportunities, as well as the trials, misunderstandings and infidelities, are also themes which are included under love poetry. Often there are bitter reflections on the 'common' women in cities who are a menace to fidelity and cause distress and break up homes.

The poet writing love poetry might write from his personal experience of love, might indeed address his poem to his own love, but he does not disclose his identity. Convention forbids him to do

so. The poetry therefore is not impersonal—it is very personal, but remains anonymous regarding authorship and identity of the persons whose situations are being sung.

Here is a poem which expresses the wonder of a lover that he should have had the experience of love at first sight with some one so far removed:

My mother and yours, what strangers they,
My father and yours, how worlds apart,
You and I ne'er met ere now
Yet like monsoon floods which mix on red soil
Kindred hearts each other have found. (Kur. 40.)[1]

A young man goes chasing a stag or an elephant along with his companions. Having lost the elephant's track, he halts, and espies something like a divine form in the distance. How is he to decide whether it is a human or divine form? The bees frequent the garlands worn by that being, but the bees never frequent objects with which they are not familiar; it seems to have ornaments, but celestials wear no ornaments; it seems to smell the flowers in its hands, but, mark you, the celestials breathe not; there is movement in its eyelids, but the gods never bat an eyelid, their eyes being eternally vigilant; further, the being seems to be restless, and sways about at the sight of an unusual form, his own. This can be no goddess—she is a creature of flesh and blood. Having convinced himself that it is a human being, and a damsel at that, he makes the further movements necessary to demonstrate his attraction for her.

Dramatic Elements

The classical love poems in Tamil are like single scenes of a long and drawn out dramatic whole. Situations are isolated, and the isolated themes are described. A number of these situational poems successively arranged may even provide the continued matter for a dance-drama or an opera.

Various participants of these love situations are featured in different moods in these poems. The male lover is always a noble specimen of his kind, brave and daring and adventurous. But, as it seems to his beloved, he is always wishing farewell, ever abandoning her to loneliness in his quest for fame and glory, or wealth and learning:

[1] The translations are from the short Anthology of Four Hundred Poems known as *Kuruntokai.*

If he could forsake the grace and bounty
That come from being ever together—
If his *be wisdom, let the wise be wise,*
And let folly be ours (Kur. 48),

she says in a petulant mood, because her lover has gone in search of either wealth or wisdom. The lady is ever the injured party. The betrothed delays the day of the espousal, keeps not his tryst, or even if he does, has to brave so much danger that she is kept constantly anxious. And so anyone who will give her hope of speedy espousal or speedy return of her beloved is always welcome. To a bard who has announced that her lord has been seen on his homeward journey after a long absence, she says:

Did you see him, or heard you those that saw him?
One thing I wish to know.
May wealthy Patali[2] *on the Soan where bathe white tusked elephants, be yours, O Bard,*
If you but will tell me from whose mouth you heard of my lover's return. (Kur. 75)

Separation is in fact dreaded by both lovers. But the male has cares about which the female of the species is not concerned. Like the Inca kings, each of whom built his own new palace in which to reside, abandoning the palaces of his predecessors, the Tamil hero has to create wealth of his own so that it might be spent in hospitality and helping the needy. It would not do to spend inherited wealth; there was no credit in giving out even for charity what had been inherited. The credit was to create one's own wealth, and spend in beneficence the wealth which had been created by oneself. The man feels the sorrow of parting, but his parting is with a purpose, and, therefore, it is not half as difficult as for the beloved he leaves behind.

This separation is intensely felt when, after the secret meetings at midnight, while the heroine is out with her companions wandering in the countryside or keeping watch over the millet fields, the hero has to return to his own home so that these secret meetings may not be found out. But the hero is ever swearing by the gods that be (Kur. 53) that he will not forsake but will soon marry her, and if he should forsake her, may he be so accursed that mendicants come not his way to receive the wealth he has made:

[2] Patali, capital of Aśoka, was near modern Patna.

Soft maid, should I forsake you,
Abandoning your fecund bosom to loneliness,
May many be the days that I see no mendicants,
To whom I may do kindly deeds. (Kur. 137)

While the pleasure of love is intense, there arises Polycrates' fear. Polycrates was a king to whom everything seemed to go so well that he lived in dread lest some evil might befall him. To lovers too in their idyllic lives, the possibility of separation is a constant submerged source of fear; that their love might have an abrupt end, that separation might come, that death might them part. Believers in the other life have a pledge that they will be united once again in the next life (Kur. 49).

If because of reluctance of parents or of brothers and sisters the hero is unable to marry the maid of his love, he will still have hope that this undying love will outlive death and maintain its constancy even through the next life:

Fear not, my soul.
If now I obtain her not, all is not lost;
My love for her, whose black and curly tresses waft a scent
Like the breeze from valiant Ori's[3] *forest groves,*
Will like today know no break or loss,
But through the Hereafter endure. (Kur. 89)

Love's Analysis

The analysis of love in these poems and of its nature is made evident in short phrases and expressions and laconic similes. It would not do to expatiate on a theme which is to be understood and not described. Love is described as a sickness, as a longing, as a bond, as a fire, as a fever. During this sickness, the moon, which is supposed to be cold and to exhale coolness, seems to emanate a heat that tortures the beloved. 'How do I love him?' asks one poet, and in lines which remind one of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sonnet replies:

Wider than the earth,
Higher than the heavens,
And deeper than the ocean depths
Is my love for that region's lord,
Where the kurinci *of the dark-hued branch*
Flowers on his hillsides making larger honey hives. (Kur. 3)

[3] A warrior chief of great renown.

The maid companion in this drama of love is a very versatile actress. She must find ways and means of promoting her mistress's interest with the male party; make marriage possible by discreet intervention and representation with the elders who decide things for her mistress; reprove the seeming carelessness and indifference of the male party, and follow her mistress like a shadow, consoling her in sorrow and separation, promising the speedy return of her lover, or deriding his indifference and his lack of consideration. On occasions when she derides the apparent heartlessness of her mistress's lover, the mistress defends him, and this is just what the maid wants to provoke by her derision. At other moments, when she wishes to reprove this dilatory lover, she can be quite curt and sarcastic.

A lover generally ingratiates himself into the good graces of his beloved through the maid-companion. After the first meeting he comes again with bouquets of flowers gathered from his gardens and fields. These are accepted with joy, and passed on to the mistress, but refused if he be dilatory, to indicate that flowers howsoever pretty are no substitute for a definite day when the wedding might be celebrated. The maid is very pert and says, 'No, thank you! We have these kāntal flowers on our hillsides too.'

With all the trials and sufferings which lovers have to endure, the gossip of the neighbours and the initial hostility of the beloved's kith and kin, love still is worthwhile, and may not be given up even for the whole world (Kur. 300).

Inconstancy and infidelity are described as faults not only of men, but also of women. In some lyrics the coquettish and unrelenting nature of the woman and her eyes themselves which are as cruel as the points of a spear which they resemble are described. The following is probably a disappointed fisherlad's lament, and he certainly plays upon the words and deeds connected with fishing:

Upon the sea, your brothers live by killing lives;
Within my heart you live by killing me ...
With curve-eyed nets your father kills those lives;
With long-eyed net you kill me likewise ...
With running prow your brothers kill those lives;
With bow-arched brow you take, indeed, my life. (Cilappatikaram)

Another has few complimentary terms for her, who will not respond to his advances:

Beneath the fish-smelling laurel's shade
Like a swan she walks, like a swan,

But her red-lid eyes are cruel
Like death are they, like death. (Cilap.)

The girl for her part deluded by his promises has given her heart to one who does not seem to care any more for her. There is no means of compelling him, and no one will believe her story for she was all alone when he made his advances and made those promises which he has not kept. But the girl remembers there was a witness, a single stork, but even that stork was so intent on the fish in the stream that it could not be cited as a witness:

Alone were we; not another soul.
Should he deny, what recourse have I?
With legs resembling panicum stems,
Intent on fish in flowing stream,
When he promised, there stood too a stork. (Kur. 25)

This ancient love poetry is rich and robust in the sentiments which it expresses, and the words which it selects to convey those sentiments. Besides eroticism, it contains good psychology and good humour. It draws inspiration from everyday life and common scenes, and is rich in the sensuous and imaginative load it gives to words:

Like a royal garland of kāntal flowers is she,
And season's jasmines with water-lilies intertwined,
But by far, more fragrant, and smoother to my touch,
And sweet, of course, to my arm's fond embrace. (Kur. 90).

Panegyric Poetry

While love poetry formed one great stream, there was another great stream, namely panegyric poetry, the outpourings of court bards, or of poets who sang placing themselves in the position of bards eulogising a chief or king. The bards and minstrels performed important functions in a society in which clans predominated and feud-vendetta between them was common.

Function of Bards

The Tamil name for the professional bard is itself derived from the word *pun*, which stands for instrumental music. Instrumental accompaniment in India was an indispensable feature of early song and dance as in Greece. The bards in the Tamil country were differentiated by the kind of musical instrument they played, the large

lyres or the small lyres, or by the posture they adopted while singing panegyrics in court, whether they were entitled to sit or stand before their patrons.

We have no means of assessing the number of bards or bardic troupes which existed in this ancient period, but all evidence points to their having been numerous, each village having its own troupe, and the larger villages and towns several troupes or families of bards and bardesses.

Many of these troupes led a wandering life in search of patronage in various parts of the Tamil country. They were of primary importance, not only in the development of oral and written literature, but also in the growth and popular appreciation of music, dance and drama. Princely patronage was the bard's reward for his service to the community. While many of the bards wandered in the Tamil kingdoms and chieftaincies, there were others who appear to have been official bards at the courts of chiefs and kings. Like all panegyrists they are mostly concerned with contemporaries, their patrons, whom they praise or whose passing away in the palace or in the foray they lament. Almost their entire literature, even if it was recorded, has perished, and what remains consists probably of a few eulogistic and didactic poems which were preserved in the courts of the patrons they celebrated.

It was their oral literature which made further literary progress possible. A bard's compositions are generally anonymous; they are not personal or individualistic, but speak for the community as a whole. The bard educates a heroic or epic age by holding up for imitation the type of hero who is the ideal for his community and his age, and crystallises his ideas even in single words which are charged with a dynamic meaning for his contemporaries. Just as words like *areté* (valour, virtue, virtu) were significant in Homeric education, the words *sānron* (perfect, wise, and complete warrior, or man), *pukal* (glory) were significant and dynamic words for creating a heroic image in Tamil society. The aim and purpose of life is to be a *sānron*, a wise and complete man; a land or a village is happy because there live many such perfect men; a mother is justifiably proud, and more gladdened than when she heard a man-child was born to her, when she hears that her son is recognised as a *sānron*. The way of the *sānron* is the path marked out for those who wish to be good and great, and is the norm to be followed.

This complete man endeavours to establish his glory (*pukal*) and his honour (*mānam*) in war and peace. When one passes from this world of changes to the changeless life, what remains is the glory man has left behind by his heroic deeds in war and by a life of altruism and liberality.

The bard achieved a perpetuation of the heroic type by singing the commemoration of heroes fallen in battle to whom commemorative stones were raised with inscriptions recording their names and their prowess, and by singing of the bravery of heroic matrons who rejoiced in the sacrifice of their sons in battle. To a poetess is ascribed one such heroic poem which is illustrative of bardic society:

Mine is the duty to give birth and growth;
The father's is the duty to make him wise (sānron);
The smith's is the duty to hand a shapely spear;
The chieftain's is the duty to see to his conduct (*in war*);
To enter the fray with his glittering sword, kill
The enemies' elephants and then return is my young son's duty.
(Puram, 189)[4]

Bardic Situations

The bards were such prominent members of early society and were so identified with panegyrics that in subsequent epochs of development, when poets composed panegyrics in praise of kings and chiefs, they did so in a 'bardic convention', as if a bard were praising the hero of the poem, and not as if the poet were directly addressing the patron himself. The *ārrupadai* (or guide poem) is such a situation where the poet imagines a bard, who has received bounteous gifts for himself and his troupe, encountering a similar band of minstrels in search of a patron. He recounts to them the reception and wealth his troupe received from a particular king or chief and recommends his fellow-bards to betake themselves to the same patron. The following is a short poem composed in a bardic convention by a poet:

Minstrel, with little lute of sweetest strain!
Suppliant with words of wisdom full:
Importunate thou askest me to rest and listen to the pleasant sounds of thy tambourine
But hear what I shall say!
The modest homes of Pānan, whose hands are full of gifts, is near the wide city . . . .
If thither—together with thy songstress, whose hair diffuses fragrance of the 'trumpet-flower', the bright-browed, sweetly smiling—you softly advance, you shall prosper well.
Long may he flourish! (Puram, 48)

[4] Puram 400 is another Anthology of Four Hundred Bardic Poems.

In such situations the poet describes the munificence of the patron by contrasting the poverty and hunger with which the bards arrive at the court of the chief or king, and the sumptuous feasting and gifts which the chief or king provides for them. These poems have been used by writers to illustrate the poverty of the bards without adverting that they were conventionalised poems. In actual life during the bardic period, they appear to have enjoyed social prestige, importance and patronage both among rulers and the people. Their degeneracy set in when, with the advent of a more complex society, the poet outshone the bard as the representative of literary and intellectual life, and the functions of the bardic troupe were differentiated and new types of professional solo dancers, musicians and artistes appeared.

The bards being panegyrists by profession were extremely eloquent persons. When poets gained ascendancy in society and the bardic institution degenerated, the bards were used in the poems of a subsequent stage of development as conventional pimps and as companions to young men in love, obviously because of their gifts of persuasive speech. For the same competence in language, the bards were conventionally used by chiefs and kings to carry messages from the battle field or battle camp to their queens in the palace.

The long panegyric poems as a whole deal with the wealth and affluence of the court and of the king's land and cities, the intellectual, religious, and moral life of the people, and the bravery of the patron and of his warriors.

Of the earliest anthologies, about fifteen thousand lines of poetry have survived to this day to represent the poetry sung in a bardic or panergyric strain. One collection is entirely in praise of sovereigns of the kingdom of the western coast, that of the Ceras, and such similar anthologies which contained poems concerning the other two kingdoms may have been compiled. The *Ten Idylls*, of long verses, praise mostly kings of the Pandya or Cola line, or some outstanding chiefs, their exploits and their territories. The third anthology of four hundred bardic poems, corresponding to an anthology of love poetry of four hundred poems, contains a great deal of panegyrics, as well as didactic poetry, laments, elegies and ethical reflections. The panegyrics, of local and limited interest as they were, are of less universal appeal, and were probably not preserved with the same enthusiasm as the love poems.

Laments and Elegies

A French scholar has remarked, and very much to the point too, that in all ancient Indian literature, it is only Tamil poetry which

contains a number of laments and elegies. The secular nature of ancient Tamil poetry, as opposed to the religious inspiration of the Vedic hymns, is never so evident as in the silence of the Tamil laments concerning the nature of the other life, and the total absence of finding spiritual solace and consolation at the prospect of other births in compensation for the transitory nature of the present life. If at all anything remains after death, it is *pukal* and *Mānam,* or the glory and praise due to the memory of days passed with heroism in battle, and in service to fellow men. One poem addresses itself to a potter who has been commissioned tc make the large urn-like jar which is to contain the corpse of the great Valavan of the Cola line, a king who has been praised by poets and whose glory shone like the resplendent sun. The potter has such a task that the urn must contain the king and all his glory. The potter is not to be envied, since the making of such an urn would involve having a potter's wheel as large as the world, and sufficient earth for moulding, for which even the mass of mount Meru would not be enough:

Can you, indeed, fashion an urn for him,
With earth from the Great Mountain
And the world as wheel? (Puram, 228)

A deep sense of melancholy and loss runs through the poems which moan the death of chieftains and of kings.

Women constituted an integral part of the bard's troupe, and they were the principal singers and dancers in programmes of entertainment at courts and village community centres. They do not appear to have been panegyrists directly apostrophising the patrons of the bard. Transmission of the arts within the class was easy since entire families, children included, went from chief to chief, and kingdom to kingdom, entertaining villages on their journeys and receiving their hospitality.

Human and Humanistic

These poems are again very human and humanistic, and in order to assess this Tamil humanism one has to consider the entire complex of attitudes prevalent and fostered in Tamil society, and the abstractions and universals which comprise the conscious and unconscious metaphysic of the age as expressed in the anthologies.

Life is considered pleasant and joyful, and death a sad ending; there is no attempt to obtain release from life except to vindicate honour and bravery, and the love for a husband who has passed away; there is a note of nostalgic sadness in the poems about senes-

cence and old age; liberality and ethical goodness are indulged in without motives of expiation and penance or mercenary recompense; rebirth is seldom spoken of in the earlier poems but the life after death is represented as an abode of permanent happiness for the good, and permanent suffering for the wicked; happiness in the future world is conceded only to those who by their bravery and altruism have established their glory in this world; love and courtship, marriage and children are considered necessary modes of human fulfilment and perfection of personality; and the norms and ideals of statecraft, ethics, truth, justice, equity, gratitude and love, which run through the anthologies and the *Tirukkural*, seem to make by comparison *Kautilya, Manu* and *Vatsyāyana*[5] limited and exclusive in the ideals and concepts they teach of moral and ethical goodness.

The following poem tersely expresses certain dynamic and creative thoughts concerning the ideals fostered by panegyric poetry:

> *Does this world really exist? If it does, it is because therein live persons who if they came by even Indra's nectar would not consume it selfishly alone; they bear ill-will towards none; they fear not nor quail before what others fear; they waver not. With ideals of striving not for their own good but for the good of the rest of men they live; hence, one may believe the world exists.*
>
> (Puram, 203)

III. Nature Poetry and the Regional Division

The division of the earth into five types of land or regions was fundamental to the development of Tamil Culture. Any study of Tamil Culture and Civilization has to take note of this environmental or regional concept. This basic division also accounts for the Cankam outlook regarding Nature and the Nature Poetry which was the result. The following reading is also taken from *Eastern Horizon*, Hong Kong, Nos. 7 and 8, 1966, *Ancient Tamil Poetry* by X. S. Thani Nayagam.

The concept of Nature and the poetry which resulted from this concept offer an interesting area of comparative study of the ancient world. The Chinese, the Indians, the Greeks and the Romans had each characteristic aspects of outlook regarding Nature which affected their poetry. Very often, such poetry was conditioned by the landscape within which it originated, and Nature poetry in Tamil

[5] Sanskrit law and moral books compiled before 2nd century A.D.

is but the response of the Tamil man to the natural environment within which he grew up.

There is a great feeling for the sea in Tamil poetry which one does not meet with in ancient Sanskrit poetry. Bound as the Tamil peninsula was on two sides of the triangular land mass by the sea, and having as did each of the Tamil kingdoms a long coastline, the people became seafarers by geographical compulsion; and the story of early Indian navigation is the story of early Dravidian seafarers who carried on extensive trade (and incidental colonisation) with the peoples of Southeast Asia and those of the Arabian and Red Sea coasts. There is an equally great feeling for rivers in Tamil poetry, especially the principal rivers on which were situated the capital cities of the Tamil country. Each important river is considered to belong to the royal line of the kingdom within which it flows, and is regarded as the mother who gives life-giving nourishment to the land, or the proud spouse of the kingly line. Annual bathing festivals in land and river characterised the season of the monsoon rains when fresh water increased in the rivers. At times of ritual bathing, the bathers also dropped into the river figurines of fish and crabs made of gold and silver with the prayer that the wealth and fertility caused by the river might increase and multiply. Some of the loveliest lyrics in Tamil are those which deal with the close bonds existing between the river and the kingdom it nourishes.

Like the other great river basins of the world, the Tamil river basins were also the cradles of culture and civilisation. It has been said that the Ganges in the north and the Kaveri in the south are the foci of Indian civilization. (I suppose this is a post-partition statement since it ignores the Indus.) But the songs and poems which either in part or whole are dedicated to the rivers of the Tamil country, speak for a reverential worship of the river as of a goddess, and of a love that one shows a parent combined with the solicitude and care that one bestows on a dear old grandparent.

The river Vaikai, which in the spring season is not so much a 'river of water as of flowers', is said to have as its function 'the nursing of the life of humanity.' The nurse with her life-giving waters is sometimes conceived as a proud spouse who sails along her course conscious of the victories in peace and war that the sovereign of her land has achieved. Here is a matchless verse from the epic *Cilappatikaram* which has been translated, but with little success:

The peacocks dance in the flower dense groves
The Kuyils sing their heartful lays
The garlands sway along your banks
With pride you move, bless you Kaveeri!

With pride you move, bless you Kaveeri!
With conscious joy of your kingly spouse
Of the glory won by his matchless spear. (Cilap.)

There is equally in Tamil literature a great feeling for the shade, probably originating from the temperature during the warm seasons insupportable even to the natives. The goodness of God, benevolence, and kindness are invariably referred to as 'shade', and all kinds and degrees of shade are mentioned. There is the 'rich fat' shade of luxuriant trees; the 'filigree shade of the branches and trees which have shed their leaves,' the 'dotted shade' of sun flecks falling through dense leaves, and the 'net-like shade' or the 'slender shade' of slender leaves and bare leafless twigs. In this heat, the sensation of the touch of water was a consolable blessing, and therefore sporting in sea and river and flowing water is frequently alluded to as also the sensation of touching soft flowers, wet petals, damp leaves, and entering umbrageous groves in which the body feels as if it has entered a cool lake.

Ancient Tamil poetry is not devoid either of feeling for mountains and pastoral landscapes, as we shall see later, since a study of landscape had come to be enjoined on the Tamil poet, and the natural landscape had to form the background of his description of human emotions and human behaviour.

Use of Flowers

What is surprising also is the extent to which the use of flowers and leaves entered Tamil life, as personal ornament, and as symbolic and aesthetic elements in love and war and in worship. Garlands of flowers, or of flowers intertwined with leaves, were worn by men and women for various occasions, so that the word for the kind of garland worn by a woman (*kotai*) came to signify a woman herself. Men seem to have adorned their heads with chaplets, a fashion which was also in vogue in Greece and in home. The gifts which a lover would give to his beloved during a period of courtship would be garlands made of flowers and graceful leaves picked from his own garden, or from the region from which which he came. Originally, the ornaments of women seem to have consisted exclusively of natural flowers, leaves and creepers, and later, when metals were used for ornaments, the gold and silver ornaments were made in imitation of these flowers and leaves, and the names of these flowers and leaves were transferred to the ornaments themselves. Many Tamil speakers are hardly aware of the origin of these ornaments, but if they paused to reflect on the names of the ornaments they wear,

they would easily trace the simple and primitive origin of their names.

The use of flowers not only in love but also in war is another characteristic not usually found mentioned in other literatures. The anthologies point to conventions whereby warriors had to wear garlands of flowers, the nature and colour of which signified the kind of warfare or the strategic movement in which they were engaged. If warriors went to attack a clan or king, and despoil him of his cattle wealth or movable property, they would have to wear the bright-red flowers of the *ixora*. An unidentified poet referring to warriors setting out on such an expedition says that, adorned as they are with the red garlands of the *vetci* on head and around the neck, they look like the setting sun. Similarly, pale flowers were worn by those who were defending a besieged fortress, and white cassia flowers by those who were returning victorious from battle, in the same manner that laurels were symbolic of triumph in the Graeco-Roman world. There were about ten such strategic movements to each of which a characteristic flower was ascribed.

Further, as the rose stood for an English royal line, the thistle for Scotland, and the fleur-de-lys for France, similarly each of the Tamil kingdoms had a significant flower—the small white margosa flowers for the Pāndyan, the fig's flowers for the Colan, and the flowers of the palmyrah palm for the Ceran.

Regional Division

The entire concept of Nature poetry was determined at one stage of the evolution of Tamil poetry by the poetic conventions which regulated that Nature was to be the background of poetry, especially of love poetry. The year was divided into six seasons, and the day was divided into its prominent periods, like the dawn, the noon-day, the evening, nightfall, and midnight. Land itself was divided into five regions—the montane, the pastoral, the riverine, the littoral and the desert, and to each region was ascribed a characteristic tree or flower. Stages or phases of love were also classified as courtship, union of lovers, separation, sorrow and pining in separation, and patient endurance. To each of these phases of love an appropriate region was ascribed with a corresponding season of the year, and a particular time of day or night. Suppose a poet wished to write a poem on a clandestine meeting between lovers, he would probably because of convention choose the mountain region, the winter or rainy season and midnight as Nature's background for his description of the love theme of union. If similes occurred in his poem, he would draw them from the flora and fauna peculiar to the moun-

tain region. Similarly if separation of lovers and their sufferings had to be described, the poet would choose a desert landscape as the background of his description of the human emotions of sorrow and sadness at the parting of lovers. If he had to write of an emotion of painful recollection and anxiety felt by a woman whose lover has gone on a far-away journey, he would choose the pasture lands and the evening sun, and the birds repairing to their nests, and the herds to their folds, as Nature's sympathetic scenes to form the background of his reflections on human emotions related to the phase of love attributed conventionally to the pasture lands. Attempts have been made to justify the choice of a particular region as corresponding to a particular aspect of the emotional life of people. One might find a certain correspondence or harmony between the sadness of scenes attending the sunset and the sadness within the hearts of separated lovers. One might find a certain correspondence between the sufferings of lovers and the bleakness of the desert. It is, however, not very easy to justify the choice of all the regions and seasons and their correspondence to the themes of love with which they are related. What seems remarkable is that geographical and physiographical conditions should have been so clearly classified and prescribed for the writing of poetry concerning human behaviour. Because a detailed study of landscape was enjoined on the poet, the descriptions of Nature and the true-to-life accuracy of simile are very noticeable. The hardness of the stems of trees, the heaviness to the touch of lotus leaves, the colours and shapes of fruits and flowers are dealt with in a very naturalistic mood, so much so that one is reminded of Greek severity or the still-life paintings of Rembrandt and Dürer.

To give but one example, there is the flower *gloriosa superba* which is frequently mentioned as blossoming on hills or pasture lands after rain. It is a most colourful flower, and is known in Malay as *bunga bendera selangor* and in Chinese as *fo shou*. These flowers most often are compared to two hands of a maiden joined in prayer. Sometimes they are spoken of as the lights which Nature sets up at sunset, or as the broken pieces of spiralled bangles. Its leaves which seem to grow at awkward angles are like the irregular walk of a drunkard.

In worship there was unlimited use of flowers and symbolism drawn from trees. Each god, and even each temple, had its sacred tree. Red flowers were used for the worship of Murukan, and white flowers for the worship of Śiva, and Tirumaal himself is of the colour of the cloud, and of the dark blue sea. The jasmine is spoken of as the symbol of chastity and marital fidelity.

Ethics is not outside the pale of this Nature poetry:

The trees were heavy with flowers, like the bounty of him who realises the transitoriness of life. (Kali. 32. 11)

Like the wealth of the bountiful man, the trees bloomed; like the effortless of those who enjoy the wealth of such a man, the bees sported among the flowers. (Kali. 35. 1-2)

IV. *Epic of the Anklet—Cilappatikaaram*

The Epic of the Anklet by the Prince ascetic, Ilanko Adikal, is a magnificent synthesis of the Tamil Culture of the period of its composition, the end of the second century A.D. The poet has synthesised in this epic a description of the triple monarchy of the Tamils, their historical greatness, their principal cities, the lives of the people of the five regions, and their characteristic music and song and dance. BERYL DE ZOETE who is an authority on dance and drama in South and South East Asia has paid particular attention to the elements which are of interest to her. The reading is from *The Other Mind, A Study of Dance in South India,* Victor Gollancz, London, 1950, pages 38 to 41.

THE CILAPPATIKAARAM IS a romantic, one might almost say mantic, epic in Tamil, concerning events which may have taken place in the second century of our era. It is supposed by some to have been written about the same period by a younger brother of a king who comes to a sad end in the epic for a noble reason; a reason which today would hardly cause dictators, kings or ministers to lose a night's sleep, much less to feel they could not bear to live. This younger brother Adigal, it is said, renounced his right to the throne and became an ascetic. But the fact is that we really know very little about the date of composition of the epic; like other famous things—histories, poems and works of art of all kinds—it has come tumbling down the centuries till it ends up, provisionally, towards the end of the first millennium A.D. during the Cola dynasty. Its date is not what concerns us here, but the fascinating picture we obtain from it of life in two great south Indian cities in Saxon times. This picture of a highly developed civilisation, in which the theatre, music, dancing and poetry, architecture and painting,[1] and seasonal feasts celebrated with enchanting fantasy formed part of the daily

[1] All of which were included under "theatre".

life of every class and occupation, is framed, it is true, in an atmosphere of magic and superstition, of omens, auspices and enchantments; but is not less convincing on that account to anyone who has looked below the surface in India and Ceylon even today. It has its barbarous aspects, too, like every State yet known to us in the Old World or the New; certainly not more barbarous than those in the Roman state with which it seems certain that the kingdoms of south India were in constant contact for the interchange of commodities. It is indeed credibly reported that Roman merchants procured Greek and Roman maidens for the harems of Indian kings.

The tragic episode of the anklet, round which this poem circles, or rather inordinately hovers, is almost submerged in the prodigious detail, like the theme in some over-elaborate counterpoint or the almost unseen, pious *leit-motif* in some vast mediaeval tapestry. Then, suddenly, the leisurely tempo changes to one of desperate urgency; we are sucked into a whirlpool of passion and avengement. The great city goes up in flames as the outraged heroine tears off her left breast and hurls it into the streets, becoming in a blazing moment the redoubtable magic goddess Pattini, worshipped in Buddhist Ceylon as well.

Here is the story, in briefest outline. In the sea-port city of Puhar, capital of the Cola kingdom, lived a blissfully married boy and girl, the children of two merchant princes. One day Kovalan, sauntering through the streets, was accosted by a hunchback woman and persuaded to buy for a fabulous price the garland of leaves which the king had just bestowed on the courtesan Madavi in reward for her perfect dancing. The price of the garland is the price of Madavi's love; immediately Kovalan forgets his bride Kannaki and all his former life, and spends rapturous days and nights with Madavi in mutual adoration, celebrating the festival of Indra on the sea-shore with every refinement of love and music and dancing in the midst of a ravishing landscape. There is a beautiful description of the First Freshes of the Kaveri, a festival of which the relics still survive in a kind of religious picnic on the river bank, with invocations to the river and thanksgiving for its perpetual flow; old books, cadjan leaves and sometimes rare manuscripts are floated by children down the stream. (Illiterate parents must find this great fun too.) But in the interchange of songs between Madavi and Kovalan, after many days of rapture there is a rift. Regrets about a faithless lover[3] in one

[3] As this is a stock theme of the songs, it would be hard for Madavi to avoid it altogether; perhaps she kept it outside at first and was by now getting a little careless. Of course, if she was improvising the words there could be no excuse.

of her songs, rouse his suspicion that he was not the only one, and he immediately leaves her, having spent all his fortune. His faithful bride utters no word of reproach, only begs to accompany him to Madura, where he must now go in search of a living. After an arduous journey through the jungle, guided by a celebrated woman ascetic, they reach the city. An embassy from the heartbroken Madavi[3] is dismissed by Kovalan ignominiously, and they are handed on by the ascetic to a cowherdess, while she herself remains outside the city walls, discussing philosophy with other itinerant sages and sagesses. Kannaki cooks what is to be their last meal[4] and after it Kovalan goes off to sell their only remaining capital, Kannaki's gold anklet, in the bazaar, leaving the footsore and anxious Kannaki in the care of an "elderly cowherdess of dynamic charm". The poet cannot let slip this opportunity for a digression on bazaars, where every kind of blade and weapon of war was sold on the open market, from machines fitted with spears for mowing down your enemies, to delicate instruments for cutting ivory and those enchanting palm-leaf decorations in which the Tamils are still skilled—as I hope to show later in writing of the ephemeral, lovely structures which are part of the ritual of magic ceremonies in Ceylon.

The kinds and qualities of gems were as highly differentiated as the classes of dance and their accompanying melodies; and in the goldsmiths' street there were flags hung from every door to indicate which of four qualities of gold was sold within. If you have wandered through the still unspoilt *souqs* of Fez or Marrakesh you will be able to visualise these business streets of Madura in its prime, as well as the exquisite outskirts of the city.

After the slow pace of the digressions to which we have become accustomed, the central episode of the epic moves with terrific speed. The humped bull which Kovalan met on his entrance to the *souqs* was, unknown to him, a prelude to disaster; a little further on he meets the king's goldsmith, followed by a hundred other craftsmen in gold and precious stones. Immediately Kovalan, impressed by his importance, accosts him with the fatal question: Can he estimate the value of an anklet like this one, fit for a queen to wear?

[3] The courtesan Madavi was very much in love with Kovalan. The daughter she had by him became a Buddhist nun during the Festival of Indra some years later, as related in *Manimekhalai*, another Tamil epic, as yet only fragmentarily translated. See pp. 146, 147.

[4] It is typical of this epic to anticipate the sequel, to which many omens are shown to point; but I seem to have met the same technique in western fiction. The thrill is not everything, except in thrillers, and I suspect that there is a clue even in them for the thriller specialist.

This brief dramatic passage is the more thrilling for its sudden and unusually swift movement. The goldsmith had, in fact, stolen the queen's anklet which was sent him to repair. When he examines Kannaki's anklet, "embossed with shining gold and inset with rubies and diamonds of the finest quality" almost exactly resembling that which he had stolen from the queen, he immediately devises a cunning plot. Telling Kovalan to wait till his return, he hastened to the palace and had the good luck to find the king about to enter the queen's apartments and eager to pacify her after a recent fit of jealousy. The recovered anklet was just the thing. Of course it was because Kovalan's hour had struck that the king was so easily convinced by the goldsmith's tale, and that he ordered the city watchmen to execute the thief out of hand, if found in possession of the anklet. At first those men protested that Kovalan did not *look* like a guilty man; but the goldsmith, by a long quotation from the thieves' scriptures, had no difficulty in persuading them that that was an additional proof of guilt, especially as a young executioner caps his stories with one about a thief dressed in blue robes and fierce as a tiger who, on a dark night in the rainy season when the village was asleep, had magically plucked his sword from his hand and magically disappeared. Immediately one of them hurls his sword at Kovalan, and Mother Earth, in extreme agony, receives his corpse.

From the moment she hears the news and discovers the body of her husband, Kannaki is as one possessed. She sets off at once for the king's palace, where the bewildered doorkeeper, rehearsing one by one the most terrifying mainfestations of the mother-goddess (Kali), decides she can be none of these, but "a human woman who seems to swell with rage.... She has lost her husband; she has in her hand an anklet of gold and she waits at the gate". The king receives her graciously and listens patiently to her charge of murder. "Divine lady, it is no injustice to put a thief to death; know that it is kingly justice." But when a rare gem, instead of the pearls that were contained in the queen's own anklet, flies out in his face, he is so stricken with horror at his failure to do justice that he falls dead from his throne. This is by no means the end of the epic, but with the self-mutilation of Kannaki, and the burning down of Madura, in consequence of her curse, we must leave Kannaki till we meet her again as the goddess Pattini in Ceylon. To another chapter also belong the many dances and musical instruments which cluster round the name of Madavi, the dancing-girl and beautiful courtesan.

V. The Characters in the Epic of the Anklet

C. Jesudasan and H. Jesudasan in their *A History of Tamil Literature*, Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, Calcutta, 1961, have written about the characters in the *Epic of the Anklet*. The Reading is from pages 54 to 58.

The story is primarily the story of a woman. There is no hero except for the heroine. The heroine alone matters to the poet. Wedded in her twelfth year, beautiful with all the shy graces of a sheltered and beloved girl, she is so unblemished that she is the pride and toast, not of the men of her place, but only of the women who surround her with affection. To be an attraction to any man but her husband, is apparently a sin for a woman, the sin of which Sīta was guilty, but not Kaṇṇahi. Of how Kaṇṇahi receives her husband's wooing, we have no idea. She just does not speak at first. We may infer that she is gracious silence, like Coriolanus' wife. Pining in Kovalan's absence, she is advised to undertake a pilgrimage. She replies briefly : 'It is not right.' Of course, silence does not mean she has no ideas. She has a dream which she tells as briefly as possible to her confidante. She seems to have seen herself as the centre of the great drama in which she is so shortly to play a part. She only says, 'I think my husband will come. We walked to a great city in my dream and then, what I saw was ridiculous. There seemed to be a great disaster, probably fire', and shuts her mouth to more details.

When Kovalan returns, if we expect a passionate scene of reconciliation, we are disappointed. There are no recriminations, no explanations. Kaṇṇahi simply offers her anklet when Kovalan confesses poverty. It is not correct to interpret that as an extravagant act of offering her husband money to spend on his prostitute. He is in genuine distress, and she is simply showing him a way out of it. How he is touched by her silent acceptance of him back to the shelter of her love, he reveals later in a passionate outburst of love. On the way to the great city, when they have not yet passed the limits of their own city, she asks like a child, 'How far is it yet to Madurai?' Once, we see her bustling about in her wifely devotion, preparing a meal for Kovalan, the last he was to take. But all her quiet beauty and silence serve as foil to the passion of her outburst in the Pāṇḍya's presence. True, when Kaṇṇahi merely smiles a sad smile in reply to her in-laws' sympathetic remarks about her loneliness, when she is a young deserted wife in her husband's home, great depths are suggested by the poet. Her quiet patience merely betokens depth, a depth of emotion dedicated purely to her hus-

band and which could be stirred only where he was concerned. With his undeserved death, at the threshold of a promise of a better and happier life, that depth is lashed to storm.

Mādavi is privileged to attract. She is privileged to sell herself to the highest bidder, irrespective of the type of man. She uses her privileges. Kovalan's wealth, apparently, is his real trap. But having bought her, his artistic mind quickly succumbs to the fascination of her pretty ways. She dances, sings and enslaves him with her moods. We catch him protesting, however, when she dances in public. How pretty is her sending the letter to Kovalan, written in a flower-petal, hidden in a garland! Poor Kaṇṇahi never wrote. Probably she was not expected to know to write. But once Mādavi was rejected, Kovalan was not to be tempted. Looking at the letter, he only commented acidly: 'Very pretty, like all her acting.' Actually that was shabby injustice to Mādavi, for she really loved him with all her heart, and after his death, caused by her own extravagances that drove him to sell jewellery in Madura, she atoned for her sin by turning nun, persuading the daughter she bore him to be a nun as well. Still we are glad she did not succeed in keeping Kovalan any longer from his wife. Only, it was not her fault that she was born a prostitute's daughter.

As for the hero, he is affectionate, brave, handsome and very accomplished. However, he is no proof against the vices of society, his very love of music and dancing drawing him towards accomplished womanhood. Kaṇṇahi is certainly not accomplished enough for him, and he has to suffer before he makes her sober, sterling qualities suffice for the needs of his poetic heart. And for Kovalan, the poet is not afraid of tainting his character with making him the centre of attraction for women. Many a woman may sicken for his love, he may think nothing of buying a mistress or abandoning his wife, but he is good enough for Kaṇṇahi. That he is sensitive to Kaṇṇahi's graces of character and that he loves her in his own poetic way, there is no doubt. After Mādavi's spell has snapped, there is evidence of his even being purged into a firmer nature.

Of the minor characters, Kaundi Aḍihaḷ stands foremost. She is not a superfluity, though she finds no place in later versions of the story. She is not a mere instrument of Jain propaganda. In her ideas and in the way she responds to the grace and nobility of Kaṇṇahi, she seems to stand for the author himself. She takes with her an atmosphere of benignity. She officiates as Kaṇṇahi's protectress of her own accord, flying at the boors who have offended her darling charge. It is her officiousness, however, that makes the hero foolhardy enough to venture out alone from Mādari's house into the city of unknown peril, instead of seeking the more dependable help

of his own merchant-class. Awareness of this, along with her grief for Kaṇṇahi's fate, drives her to seek death by fasting. To remove Kaundi would be to omit one very strong emotional factor from the story.

Iḷango makes the story look realistic by blending legend with historical facts. It certainly is a powerful tragedy, but the anti-climax is so long-drawn-out that the tragic intensity vaporises by the time the curtain falls. But the author is here concerned with the introduction of the new cult, the cult of the worship of the chaste woman. This cult, it is true, has its roots in the Sangam period itself and has now been absorbed into Hinduism by identifying Kaṇṇahi with Bhagavathi.[1] But, to Iḷango goes the credit of having cultivated it so elaborately as an independent cult in Tamilnad. The religious conditions of Iḷango's time are naturally reflected in his work. Saivism, Vaishṇavism, Jainism and Buddhism are shown by him as co-existing without disharmony. The poet's own strong and unmistakable inclination to Jainism does not make him fling mud on other religions. There is a pronounced didactic element also in the story. The prefatory verse declares that the story is meant to teach three things, namely, justice visiting the tyrant, the glory of chaste womanhood and the relentless nature of destiny. The epic closes also on an ethical note.

Few epics could have a more loose structure than *Silappadihāram*. Hardly one chapter resembles another. The narrative portion proper which has a sustained grandeur of style, is in the *ahaval* or *āśriyam* metre. One entire chapter is the ill-fated duet of Mādavi and Kovalan. The chapter on Mādavi's dance is filled with technicalities. Lyrics and prose are interspersed to avoid monotony. One important feature of the epic is this prose, the earliest available in Tamil, though it has all the beauties of alliteration, assonance and rhythm that we associate with poetry. Only the line-pattern is absent. Iḷango, at times, indulges in puns and lengthy metaphors, and his similes verge on conceits though the Sangam flavour is still present. His descriptions are too long with wearisome cataloguing of details, but are at times used to advantage in working up the required atmosphere.

The rounding up of the story, with the image of Kaṇṇahi in the centre, is worthy of special attention. Almost all the actors except the dead, are summoned to form part of the group-photograph that the poet has arranged, finding therein room for his own history. One real fault we would find in the work is the incredible amount of supernatural element, with over-emphasis on Fate. But that would

[1] *Ilakkiyamaṇimālai*, p. 128.

be to ignore the taste of the times in which the great epic was born.

VI. *Manimeekalai*

This Buddhist saint named after a patron goddess of navigation, is the heroine of a Buddhist 'epic' in which the social and philosophical doctrines of Buddhism are expounded through episodes connected with the main characters. This long poem is of a later date than the *Cilappatikaram,* though there is an obvious attempt in the poem to relate it to the earlier epic as if the two epics were sung by contemporaries. The following reading is from *A History of Tamil Literature,* Annamalai University, 1961 by Professor T. P. MEENAKSHI SUNDARAN. The Reading is from pages 43 to 46.

CILAPPATIKARAM IS SAID to form a Twin Epic with *Maṇimekalai. Maṇimekalai* is by a great poet, Cāttanār, often mistaken for a poet of the earlier period. Epic ceases to be, by now, a mere collection of monologues. Though it is sometimes claimed to be earlier than *Cilappatikāram,* a careful reading shows that this epic could have meant nothing to an audience which was not familiar with *Cilappatikāram.*

The story starts with Mātavi speaking tearfully of the greatness of Kaṇṇaki and refusing not only to take part any more in the public dance but also to allow this to her daughter, Manimekalai who has become a perfect danseuse. Maṇimekalai overhearing this conversation is overwhelmed by grief. The prince of the land given away to pleasure is incited by the mother of Mātavi, who believes that it is a sin to depart from the hereditary duty of her clan, to become passionately attached to Maṇimekalai. Later we learn that the prince and Manimekalai were husband and wife in a series of previous births.

Thus there is within and without her a struggle between her passion for the prince and her spiritual leanings, the first fanned by the grandmother, the prince and the general disposition of the society, the latter strengthened and developed by her mother, the angels and the great Aravaṇa Aṭikaḷ, the saint of the epic. The prince pursues her but an angel magically removes her to a distant island to reveal to Maṇimekalai her birth and mission in life. From her guardian angel, after whom she is herself named, she attains certain magical powers. She comes to receive from a sacred pond on the anniversary of the Buddha's birth a magical bowl which,

when once filled by a chaste woman, is ever full of food. The land is in the grip of a cruel famine and she goes everywhere to feed the poor, the criminal, the needy. The prison house becomes the House of *Dharma.* But afraid of the attentions of the prince, she takes the form of a well known woman of the day whose husband unfortunately comes and sees the prince pursuing her at the dead of night. This mistaken identity leads him to kill the prince. Maṇimekalai rushes to fall on the prince and cry.

Fortunately she hears a divine voice advising her to bemoan no more. The queen puts her in a cell to die but because of her magical power she survives. The queen sends a villain to attack her modesty but Maṇimekalai escapes by taking the form of a man. The queen repents and Maṇimekalai goes about learning the tenets of the various religions of the day.

Learning of the misfortune which has to befall Kāviri-p-pūmpaṭṭinam, as the result of an erosion by the sea, Maṇimekalai goes to worship at Kaṇṇaki's temple in the Cera Capital and then to Kāñci to help the famine-stricken people there. Her mother and Aravaṇa aṭikaḷ also come there. She sits at the feet of the Master and saint and performs *tapas.* Unfortunately, the final portion of the epic is missing.

The story has a religious motive, the propagation of Buddhism. There are a number of allusions to Buddhist mythology and philosophy. The poet is also intolerant, bringing into contempt the followers of other religions especially the Jains. Here are brought together the various folk-stories prevalent among the Buddhists.

The discussions which Maṇimekalai has with the followers of other sects give rise to a new development in Tamil literature. The philosophical and religious debates are given epic grandeur and written in poetry. Often these are called epics. *Kuṇṭalakeci* is one such work included by tradition among the five major epics.

The verse form is really perfect and the greatness of the poet is visible everywhere. The author is full of humour, though a biting humour, against other religions. His similes are very expressive, as for instance when he compares the king and queen of the naked Nagas to a he-bear and a she-bear respectively.[1] He has in him the great teacher who can explain philosophy so as to appeal even to the most illiterate.

There is a quotation in *Maṇimekalai* from *Tiru-k-kuraḷ*,[2] and therefore it has to be placed after the period of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. There is a chapter which seems to be a translation of Dinnāga's work on

[1] Cāttanār, Maṇimekalai, 16.68.
[2] *Ibid.*, 22.59.

logic.[3] It does not seem to be a part of the epic. The principles of Cānkya philosophy and others, also seem to belong to an earlier age than the Cānkya Kārika and other books now available. This epic may be assigned to an age following *Cilappatikāram,* in the period preceding the Pallava supremacy.

Kavunti and Māṭalan in *Cilappatikāram* and Aravaṇa Aṭikaḷ in *Maṇimekalai,* are important characters in the structure of these two epics. The chorus plays an important part in Greek drama, as giving an expression of opinion on the action of the drama, even as it is taking place. Apart from this critical function, the chorus represents an agency which knows more than the actors. In *Cilappatikāram,* without the nun Kavunti who accompanies Kovalan and Kaṇṇaki on their way to Maturai, the author could not so effectively have created an ethically perfect portrait of Kovalan and Kaṇṇaki.

Māṭalan who narrates the previous achievements of Kovalan is equally important. But he is important from a different point of view. He knows almost all the characters as an elder, and outlives most of them. He knows more than any of the characters. He has travelled all over India. His sympathy, his piety, his life of pilgrimage, his power of beautiful expression (e.g. "the song of Mātavi crushes down the Northern kings"), his saintly advice, his communication with spiritual powers, and, above all, the reverence shown by all the characters including the spiritual power, Cāttan, make it easy for us to believe that all turn to him for explaining the past, the present and the future, not of course like an astrologer, but as the man of great experience. He may be called a choric spectator (*sākṣin*) in the drama.

In *Maṇimekalai* this kind of character comes in the form of Aravaṇa Aṭikaḷ. He has a moral and saintly stature greater than that of Māṭalan. He knows all the characters and their previous births as well personally. Like Māṭalan he is there from the beginning to the end of the story with a suggestion that he lives thereafter as well. To him all come for an explanation of past, present and future. He is not merely worldly-wise like Māṭalan; he is blessed with a spiritual vision and therefore foretells what is going to happen, but only when the listener has spiritually attuned to listen to that prophecy.

The introduction of this kind of character, who may be called the spectator, probably helps to infuse confidence in our mind and to effect economy in composition. His statement carries weight and what otherwise would require many scenes comes to be stated succinctly by him in a narrative speech.

[3] *Ibid.,* 27.

VII. Lofty Maxims

The *Tirukkuraḷ* is a great classic of wisdom literature, and is compared with similar world literature. ALBERT SCHWEITZER who has written extensively on Ethics has said that there hardly exists in the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom. He writes down his impressions concerning the *Tirukkuraḷ* in his book *Indian Thought and its Development*, pages 200 to 205, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1951. The *Tirukkuraḷ* also appears to synthetise the ethical thought of the classical period of Tamil Literature.

THAT THE IDEA of active love did arise in the popular ethics of India in fairly ancient times we know from many stories we meet in her literature and especially through the ethical maxims found in the Kural, a work which probably belongs to the 2nd century A.D.

> The Kural is a collection of 1330 maxims in distich form, attributed to the weaver Tiruvaḷḷuvar. In the matter of authorship it is probable that not all the maxims are Tiruvaḷḷuvar's own, but that he also versified some which were ancient possessions of the people.
>
> Kural means short strophe. Tiruvaḷḷuvar is really not a name, but a title borne by the religious teachers who work among the lower castes in the south of India.
>
> The work is written in the Tamil language. This, like Canarese, which also belongs to the south of India, is an indigenous Indian language (Dravidian), not Indo-Aryan.
>
> We know nothing certain about the life of Tiruvaḷḷuvar.

What a difference between the Kural and the Laws of Manu, which originated some four centuries before it! In the latter, under the dominance of the Brahmanic spirit, world and life affirmation is still just tolerated alongside world and life negation. In the Kural world and life negation is only like a distant cloud in the sky. In 250 maxims—they form the concluding part of the work—earthly love is lauded. Later times, because they cause offence, interpret them allegorically as concerning the love of the soul to God.

Christianity similarly interprets the Song of Solomon, a love-song probably originally sung at weddings and later absorbed into the Old Testament, as if it described the relations of the soul to its heavenly Redeemer.

In the ethics of the Kural, as in those of the Laws of Manu, the idea of reward has a place. The way of virtue is recommended because it leads to a better reincarnation or to liberation from rebirth. Alongside of this is found also the naïve view which is so conspicuous in Chinese ethics that moral behaviour results in earthly welfare and immoral in misfortune. Nevertheless, ethics in the Kural are not so entirely dominated by the idea of reward as in Brahmanism, Buddhism and the Bhagavad-Gītā. We already find here the knowledge that good must be done for its own sake. It shines out from various maxims.[1]

> "Even though one should say, There is no higher world, it is still good to give"(222).—"True liberality asks nothing in return. What does the world give in return to the cloud that gives it rain?" (211).

Whilst the Bhagavad-Gītā in a forced and chilly manner gives as a motive for remaining in active life that it is in accordance with the order of the Universe, the Kural justifies it—what an advance! —by the idea of ethical activity. Work and profit place a man in a position to do good.

> "All staying at home and waiting on the household have for their end hospitality and alms-giving" (81).—"All property gained by industrious toil is there for good men in order that they may practise well-doing" (212).

According to the Kural, duty is not confined, as in the Bhagavad-Gītā, to what the caste calling involves, but consists in general in "all that is good".

Maxims about joy in activity, such as one would not expect from Indian lips, bear witness to the strength of the world and life affirmation present in the Kural.

> "Even if fate did not permit of success: the striving in itself rewards the exertion of one's body" (619).—"If one accepts the burden as joy, there emerges a splendour for which even one's enemies are eager" (630).

Like the Buddha and the Bhagavad-Gītā, the Kural desires inner freedom from the world and a mind free from hatred. Like them

[1] The quotations are from the German translation "Der Kurral" by Karl Graul, D.D., Leipzing 1856 (Derfling and Franke) and London 1856 (Williams and Norgate) (Bibliotheca Iamulica).

it stands for the commandment not to kill and not to damage.[2] It has appropriated all the valuable ethical results of the thought of world and life negation. But in addition to this ethic of inwardness there appears in the Kural the living ethic of love.

"The loveless man takes everything for himself; the man full of love gives even his own bones to others" (72).— "The life of a soul without love is like the sprouting of a dried-up tree on stony ground" (78).—"What help can all the outer limbs give, if the inner limb of the body, love, is wanting?" (79).—"If one weighs the value of the good deed done without consideration of the advantage : its kindness is greater than the ocean" (103).—"To assuage the deadly hunger of the poor is the treasury of the rich" (226).—"Wealth in benevolence is the wealth of wealths. Wealth in possessions the mob has also" (241).

With sure strokes the Kural draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity. On the most varied questions concerning the conduct of man to himself and to the world its utterances are characterised by nobility and good sense. There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom.

"If a kind man inherits property, it is as if a fruit-tree bears ripe fruit in the middle of village" (216).—"The child 'Mercy' born of love by the care of the well-to-do nurse 'Well-being'" (757).—"The wealth of him who gives nothing to the poor is as if a very fine lady grows old in solitude" (1007).

"The gift is not the measure of the gift : its measure is in the magnanimity of the receiver" (105).

"Better than spending with a happy heart is to carry on sweet speech with a happy face" (92).—"For those who do not understand how to be friendly, the great wide world, even in bright daylight, lies in darkness" (999).

"Among all treasures that may be gained none can compare with attaining to freedom from envying any man" (162).

"To forget good is not good; immediately to forget what is not good is good" (108).—"Holy as a penitent is he who forgets bitter speech from the lips of one who is excited" (159).

"Self-control leads to the immortals; want of self-control rushes into thick darkness" (121).—"He who is not eager for pleasure, but knows that pain is natural, will remain free from distress" (628).

[2] In opposition to the Buddha, the Kural decides that one may not eat meat even when one is quite innocent of the slaughter of the animal.

"Outward purity comes through water: purity of the heart is manifested in sincerity" (298).

"Those who are considerate and forbearing without letting their duty suffer the world gladly gives itself to such" (578).—"The world rests on the excellence of the good prince who knows how to change enmity into friendship" (874).

"Even if they are highly placed, those who are not high-minded are not high; even if their station be humble, those who are not low-minded are yet not low" (973).

"If thou dost harm to thy neighbour in the morning, harm comes of itself to thee in the afternoon" (319).

"Asking the way, happiness goes of itself to him who is undaunted in spirit" (594).—"Whoever says, 'I will work for my family', before him there goes at once the goddess of good fortune, her robe well girded-up (*i.e.* as a fellow worker)" (1024).

"Take no pleasure, even if thou shouldst win, in gambling. Even winning is as if a fish swallows the metal hook" (931).

"The friendship of well-conducted men waxes like the new moon: the friendship of fools wanes like the full moon" (782).

"Husbandmen are the axle-pin on the wagon of the world: they give support to all who, not caring for husbandry, are engaged in other work" (1032).

So a natural and ethical world and life affirmation of this kind was present among the people of India at the beginning of our era, although nothing of it can be found in Brahmanism, Buddhism and Bhagavad-Gītā Hinduism. It gradually penetrates into Hindu thought through the great religious teachers who had sprung from the lower castes and lived among and felt with the people.

VIII. Message to the World

The *Tirukkuraḷ* covers a wide range of ideals. The thought of the author concerning some of the ideals is studied by Prof. A. CHIDAMBARANATHA CHETTIAR, formerly Professor of Tamil, Annamalai University, South India. The reading is taken from a paper presented to the XXV International Congress of Orientalists, Moscow (1960), and published also in *Tamil Culture*, Vol. IX, 1961, pages 101 to 106.

THIRUVALLUR, ONE OF the greatest of Tamil poets and thinkers who lived somewhere between the first century B.C. and the first century A.D. has given to the world his monumental work, *Thirukku-*

ral (consisting of 1,330 couplets) which is of perennial interest to the nations of the world. The work has been translated into several important languages of the world. Close students of *Thirukkural* like Dr. G. U. Pope, Mr. Ellis and Rev. H. A. Popley have paid glowing tributes to the author and have stated that the *Thirukkural* is a beacon light for the world. Scholars like Dr. Albert Schweitzer have acclaimed the work as a marvellous treatise on ethics, which while laying emphasis on self-affirmation instead of on self-negation, shows to the world how people should love one another, revere one another and understand one another. On the foundations of understanding, tolerance, love and reverence for life, the edifice of the Unity of Mankind is to be erected. Thiruvalluvar has done a great deal to pave the way for Universal Brotherhood, Peace and Plenty.

Thiruvalluvar has the message that one can either be a householder or an ascetic and one can prosper in both states and attain bliss. Sometimes, stray verses from *Thirukkural* are cited to show that Thiruvalluvar placed the life of an ascetic over and above the life and doings of a man pursuing domestic life. Yet one can cite authority for the other view also. For instance, in *Kural* 48 he says that the householder who, not swerving from virtue, helps the ascetic in his way of life, endures more than those who endure penance. In *Kural* 38 he says that he who suffers no day to pass without doing some good turn to others will by such conduct permanently block future births.

He has laid stress on the attitude of the heart rather than on the externals of religion. In *Kural* 34 he says whatever is done with a spotless mind is virtue; all else is vain show. In another place (in *Kural* 280) he says that there is no use of a shaven crown or of tangled hair, if one abstains from such deeds as the wise have derided.

The message of Thiruvalluvar is not pessimistic but optimistic. He has asked us to brave dangers and to stand fast. More than this, he has asked us to be cheerful under adverse circumstances. (See for instance *Kural* 621—If troubles come, simply laugh; there is nothing like laughter which can overcome sorrow.) In another place, he pities people who cannot be cheerful at all. In *Kural* 999 he says, "To those who cannot rejoice, the whole world is buried in darkness even in broad daylight." One of the ways in which one can be cheerful is to avoid wrath. He asks in *Kural* 304, "Are there greater enemies than wrath, which would crush laughter and joy?"

Sometimes, Thiruvalluvar is looked upon as having underlined the inexorable nature of fate. Though in a chapter (Chap. 38), he has stressed the importance of fate and though in the concluding couplet of that chapter he has asked "What is stronger than fate?

If an expedient to avert it is thought of, it will intrude through that expedient itself." It is significant that in other places he has held up the free will of man (as in Chap. 62 on Manly Effort), where in the concluding couplet he says, "They who strive hard without fatigue or desperation or delay will vanquish fate and throw it out." In four chapters, especially (Chapters 60 to 63 entitled "On Enthusiams, Against Idleness, On Manly Effort, On Perseverance in spite of Difficulties"), he has laid great emphasis on the free will of man and has removed the misconception that man is God's sport and that all his doings have been pre-ordained or pre-determined. To him, fate is sometimes esoteric but never inexorable.

In the chapter on "Enthusiasm" for instance, Thiruvalluvar states that the property or possession to be prized for is enthusiasm, since people who are destitute of that cannot possess anything at all. To be enthusiastic in mind and to be energetic in body is a great gift. All other possessions like the possession of wealth pass away and abide not. People who are agile and enthusiastic never say, "I have lost my property." Persons who persevere to their utmost will be sought after by wealth. Thiruvalluvar wants everyone to have high ambitions and glorious aspirations in life. It does not matter to him if the object sought for sometimes will not materialise. It is enough to have thought nobly and aimed high. It is only people who sweat and labour and persevere that can be liberal and generous to others in gifts. In the modern world also, this is found to be quite true. It is only nations like the American, Russian and the British who have consolidated their economic position that can go to the help of the under-developed or undeveloped countries. Enthusiasm is itself wealth, according to the learned sage. "Those that do not have that wealth are only trees in the shape of man. . . ."

In the chapter (Chap. 62) on "Manly Effort", the poet has exhorted the nations to be enterprising. He is one of the great thinkers of the world who have been of the opinion that the best way to attain greatness is not to regard anything as impossible under the sun. If one strives hard, one is sure to make possible even the supposedly impossible things. One should not do things in a half-hearted way; one should exert oneself to the full, for the world will abandon those who leave their work unfinished. It is only those that are alert and agile that can be proud of being helpful to others, because generosity of a man who does not strive hard will be of little worth like the manliness of a hermaphrodite who brandishes a sword. On the other hand, if people are engrossed in their work with the thought that the path of glory is not a bed of roses, they will be able to prop up and support their kith and kin. Manly effort makes a wealthy man; lack of effort means poverty. Not to be born in a fortunate family

is no sin; but to be devoid of manly effort is a thing of disgrace. Even though one is not ordained by fate to secure a particular thing, if one makes an honest and earnest effort, that itself is a sure step towards success. And sometimes, a man who is of strong manly effort, even if he is not as fortunate as his brothers or brethren to reap quick benefits or to become suddenly great or wealthy, is sure to receive at least his due wages. Probably, on occasions he may not be able to achieve spectacular distinction or reward. But, persons who undauntedly labour and work hard can conquer fate, even if fate has willed otherwise.

Thiruvalluvar wants us to laugh, as pointed before, even amidst great dangers, for that is the only way in which dangers or sorrows can be overcome. People who do not sorrow in the midst of sorrow actually torment sorrow. Just as a bullock while drawing a cart through deep mire and sand struggles hard against all difficulties by lowering its very nose near to the earth, by bending its knees, and by pulling hard, people who want to become great should not hesitate to encounter difficulties in their way. If troubles come even in quick succession, the brave man should never be daunted by them. Even in the midst of happiness and joy, the person, who has cultivated a disposition to think that after all sorrow is the lot of man, never becomes troubled in mind. Anyone who regards even troubles and distresses as pleasure becomes great and is sometimes worshipped by his own enemies. This has become true in various continents and climes where great leaders of thought and leaders in political life have sacrificed their lives for holding aloft the torch of learning and for keeping the flag of their country flying high.

Thiruvalluvar has devoted a fine chapter to "Agriculture". He says that agriculture, though a laborious profession, is the most excellent one, because all other professions will not survive if there is no production of food. Agriculturists are more or less a linch-pin of the world and are the support of other toilers who cannot till the soil. It can be said that those that live on agriculture alone lead a proper life; all others may be regarded as carrying on a cringing and dependent life. Partiotic farmers are able to bring other states and nations under the umbrella of their country. Even the ascetics who abhor possessions and do not apparently have desire for anything will suffer, if the farmers do not do their duty. Thiruvalluvar has laid great stress on manuring. "Manuring is better than ploughing, and after weeding, watching is better than watering." The agriculturist who lives nearer to his farm is sure to reap better benefits than the one who is an absentee landlord. This proximity to the field of operation has been emphasised by Thiruvalluvar as follows: "If the owner does not personally attend to his cultivation, his land

will behave like an angry wife and languish." In a jocular way, he further remarks that the Lady-Earth will laugh at the sight of those who say that they have nothing of their own and go about begging. The idea is that Mother-Earth wants her sons and daughters to apply themselves to agricultural operations in order that poverty might be abolished and plenty might be ushered in.

Chapter Four

THE FINE ARTS

1. Origins of South Indian Art

HEINRICH ZIMMER is one of the writers on Indian Art who traces the art of South India in historical times to trends evident in the Indus Valley finds. In the following reading taken from his masterly volumes on *The Art of Indian Asia,* Vol. I, pages 24 to 36 *passim,* Pantheon Books, New York, 1955, the author finds relationship between the seals and the dancing figures found at Mohenjo-daro, and the later animal art and the bronzes of Southern India.

WE ARE FAR from understanding at present the rich vocabulary of symbols on the seals of Mohenjo-daro; nevertheless, the more we comprehend of them the more it becomes apparent that the religious civilization of the Indus in the third millennium B.C. was the source of many of the traditions prevalent in Central and Southern India today. The Indus cities reveal fundamental elements and striking details that were completely foreign to the religious and literary traditions of the Aryans, but which reappeared in Indian art and religion (first among the folk, then among the governing classes) when the Aryan domination of Northern India began to wane during the second half of the first millennium B.C. Their return to the surface can be studied in the early Buddhist monuments of Bhārut and Sāñcī. And their continuing force became increasingly evident with relentlessly rising tide of Śivaite Hinduism. The common occurrence of the lingam and yoni in orthodox, so-called "Aryan" temples, and the recognition of the great goddess in medieval and modern India as the peer of (or even as superior to) the greatest of the gods, marks the resurgence of an archaic,

irrepressible, apparently basic mode of Indian religious belief and experience, which had never been quite done away by the Vedic Brāhmans.

Important elements in this non-Aryan, pre-Aryan popular religion are serpent and tree worship. Tree worship has been transformed in Buddhism into a pious reverence for the holy trees under which the Buddha and his predecessors in the prehistoric past gained enlightening wisdom. Foremost among the revered trees was the Indian fig (*aśvattha* : *Ficus indica*), which sends down from its branches secondary roots to reach the ground and become additional stems. An Indus Valley seal shows an aśvattha tree, stylized, with the twin heads of some sort of horned animal springing from its trunk.

The animal on this seal seems to be one-horned; so does the bull in the seal at the lower left. Of course this unicorn effect may be the result of the renditions in profile; nevertheless the possibility of a one-horned beast is not to be excluded; for the unicorn plays a role in Indian lore. Symbolizing the superhuman, semidivine strength gained by chastity, it figured in the popular Indian novels and folktales of the first millennium B.C., which the Buddhists transformed into stories of the earlier lives of the Buddha and which also were incorporated in that encyclopedic epic of Hinduism, the *Mahābhārata*. The Indian unicorn, perhaps dating from the third millennium B.C., passed into China, where it is known as *ki-lin*. There it appears among the files of sculptured animals (representing the gifts and tributes brought from foreign lands) that stand on either side of the processional streets leading to the sacred graves of the ancient emperors. Furthermore, during the first centuries of the Christian era the figure entered Egypt, where it was incorporated in a tradition of zoological allegory that played a considerable role in the European Middle Ages. According to the Christian legend, the unicorn cannot be caught by any huntsman, yet it can be tamed by a virgin, a stainless damsel, whom it will approach without fear, since it feels akin to her. It places its head on her lap, innocently falling asleep, and so gives the huntsman his opportunity. In this context the unicorn became for the Christians an emblem of Christ, who had been brought to mankind on the lap of the Virgin, to be slain.

Perhaps the most amazing of the discoveries at Mohenjo-daro is the torso of a dancing male, in stone. The head has been lost; so also have been the arms and the left leg from the knee down—for these were made separately and attached to the trunk with dowels (the holes into which the pins were inserted can be clearly seen). They must have been fashioned separately for a specific purpose, otherwise surely the whole figure would have been carved from a

single piece. This consideration supplies a valuable hint for the posture of the missing limbs. They did not cling to the body but protruded into space, perhaps even swayed: obviously the most convenient way to carve such limbs is separately. Moreover, the point at which the lower left leg was attached was just above the knee—suggesting that the left foot did not rest on the ground but was in the uplifted attitude of a dance posture. Nor does it require much imagination to recognize what the posture must have been. One has only to seek some counterpart in the later Hindu tradition, and in this case, at any rate, he who seeks will quickly find. For the most magnificent and best known of the medieval South Indian bronzes are those representing Śiva in his manifestation as Naṭarāja, "the king (*rāja*) of dancers (*naṭa*)". The uplifted foot and widely flung arms can be readily cast in bronze, but for the sculptor in stone such a pose is difficult. His most convenient solution is to shape the projecting members separately and attach them to the trunk with pegs.

It seems fairly clear that the torso of Mohenjo-daro must have represented a dancing figure of this type, even though we cannot be sure that the gesture of the arms corresponded to the bold postures of the bronzes wrought almost four millenniums later. In fact there is no evidence that any of the images of the Indus Valley had four arms. This specifically Hindu trait does not appear even in the early Buddhist and Hindu monuments of the era B.C.; it was evolved, apparently, during the first millennium A.D. The idea of four, and even more numerous, arms was developed to indicate the supranormal divine character of the beings thus represented. A god with no more than two arms, one might say, would be an understatement. The hands exhibit simultaneously the various weapons, emblems, and symbols denoting the powers and the manifold activities of the deity in question: weapons threatening death appear side by side with symbols of prosperity and life, thus making evident the ambivalence of divine power. For, transcending the pairs-of-opposites, the Indian gods and goddesses are at once benevolent and wrathful, terrible and auspicious; they are harmonies of contrariety capable of manifesting all or any of their antipodal powers at will.

The animals on the Mohenjo-daro seals have, for the most part, a high aesthetic value. They are masterpieces of an art that ranks with the best traditions of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, while standing in a position of apparently complete independence. The style is unmistakable and distinctive. In the representation of the Indian bull, the treatment of the dewlap, the modeling of the muscles, and the slenderness of the hoofs originate in a conception

of the living organism that is peculiarly Indian. Egypt too produced masterpieces of animal sculpture—the divine falcon protecting the Pharaoh's head, the sacred cats and holy monkeys impersonating learning and knowledge; but Egyptian art, as well as Mesopotamian, though perfectly realized when rendering in the round, in its reliefs insisted on the outline and on the masterfully drawn profile. Egyptian relief remained to the end under the influence of the tremendously important and highly refined Egyptian system of pictographic hieroglyphics, where animal figures were engraved or painted in profile on walls or on stone tablets. In these inscriptions the living organisms were reduced to mere apparitions circumscribed by cleanly cut contours, since a recognizable profile was all that was needed to communicate the meaning. The resultant systematization of monumental, meaningful glyphs bestowed on the familiar birds and animals of the region the permanency of a mysterious, enigmatic repose, transforming them into symbols.

In the animals of Mohenjo-daro, on the other hand, though the outlines are perfect and constitute one of the principal features of this sensitive style, the bodies are full of individual life. A subtle realism is at work that catches the beasts in attitudes nearer than the Egyptian to nature; nearer to the spontaneous behavior of the fleeting moment. Such forms are not frozen into stony hieroglyphs; they are full of inward life. The bulks are heaving, as if breathing, throbbing to the circulation of their own life-sap. They are not portions of a surface caught within a defining contour, but swell from the background with the warmth and unrest of living bodies, exhibiting nothing of the intentional, skillful abstractness of monumental design that underlies the sculptures of ancient Egypt and the Near East. Moreover, it is remarkable that although they are not executed in high relief, these tiny animal figures communicate a very strong suggestion of three-dimensional plastic reality, much closer to life than the willful generalizations of the contemporary artists further westward, whose renditions were based on analysis, skillful choice, and a systematization of outline.

Animal sculpture, in fact, is one of the finest chapters of Indian art. A feeling of profound fellowship and comradeship with the beasts, and with all living things, has inspired Indian thought throughout the ages, and it was certainly present in this early pre-Aryan period.

A fortunate discovery among the remains of Mohenjo-daro was the bronze figurine of a dancing girl. The bangles on her arms served by their tinkling to mark the rhythm of her steps. The figure immediately reminds one of the *deva-dāsīs*—"slave girls or female servants (*dāsī*) of the god (*deva*)"—who are the dancers institution-

ally attached to certain Hindu temples. For a god's temple is the earthly copy of his celestial abode, reproducing the paradise wherein the pious devotee hopes to share, after death, the beatitude of the deity's presence. A divine *corps de ballet*—a celestial troupe of damsels serving as dancers, singers, and actresses—will be one of the chief entertainments at the kingly court; and on earth, in the deity's temples, their counterparts are the nautch or dancing girls, the *deva-dāsīs*. It is apparent that in this little bronze the same realism has been achieved as in the modeling of the stone of the male dancer discussed above. The statuette is notable particularly for its treatment of the slim back and the long legs, and for its alert resiliency and refined force. The body of the graceful, slender girl is full of the dynamism of life, the same hidden energy welling from within that constitutes one of the most characteristic features of classic Indian art. Moreover, there is a provocative tilt to the hip joint that foreshadows a conventional posture highly typical of the later figures, particularly those of female divinities. There is a late bronze from southern India, dating from *c*. A.D. 1200. It represents the consort of Śiva, the goddess Devī, as Pārvatī, the daughter of the Mountain King, Himālaya. The resemblance of the form and posture to those of the Indus Valley dancing girl suggests a continuity of at least four thousand years for this particular ideal of feminine grace.

The historian has to bear in mind when estimating the probable role of the early Indus cities, firstly, that a connection existed with Mesopotamia. In fact this connection is what supplied our clue for the dating of the remains. Obviously, however, as shown by the comparison of the art styles, the connection was not one of cultural identity but a consequence of commercial intercourse. Secondly, the cult of the Mother Goddess indicates that the Indus cities were part of a widely diffused neolithic culture that extended from the Adriatic to the Far East and was focused chiefly in the valleys of the Nile, Euphrates, Tigris, Helmand, and Indus. Thirdly, the Indus cities harbored a number of basic elements of Indian religion, art, and symbolism that disappear from the historian's view following the arrival of the Aryans, but become visible again the moment stone monuments reappear (i.e., in the Maurya Buddhist art of the third to first centuries B.C.). Furthermore, the same elements became increasingly conspicuous when certain aspects of the pre-Aryan religious traditions returned to view in Buddhism, Jainism, and later Hinduism. And finally, the best of the figures on the Indus seals, as well as the few statuettes preserved to us, are distinguished by a feeling for form and a broadness of treatment unequalled in the contemporary glyptic arts of the neighboring civilizations of

Elam, Mesopotamia, and Egypt. These reliefs do not aim at vivid profiles or silhouettes but at a refined illusion of three-dimensional reality. The vitality of the tiny organisms, the sense of a life-energy welling from within them and swelling to their surfaces, makes manifest at an almost incredibly early date one of the most characteristic traits of later Indian art.

II. The Ideal of Feminine Beauty

There has been so far no study of the Tamil ideals of feminine beauty as found in Tamil literature and South Indian Art. However, HEINRICH ZIMMER again, is able to trace a distinct difference between the Art of the South and the Art of the North concerning feminine beauty, *The Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. I, pages 114 to 117.

AND SO NOW we can return to the South Indian bronzes and their evidence of the evolution of the Indian ideal of feminine beauty. The Ceylonese Paṭṭinī Devī of the seventh to tenth century is close to the traditional form, with its marked contrast of the slender waist against the heavy breasts and hips. The goddess, dignified and graceful in this manifestation, represents the chastity and virtue of the housewife and mother. Her image expresses fully the perennial type of Hindu womanhood—though with a certain dryness peculiar to the Dravidian tradition, which accords readily with a work in metal. For in this art the human body is not conceived of, primarily, as a mass emerging slowly, under hammer and chisel, from the shapeless matter of the rock; it comes into form as a kind of engraving imposed on the soft material of a waxen model, there being no resistance to the instrument that cuts into wax. And the finishing process, in its turn, is a technique like that of designing. It does not shape a formless block, but smooths out and covers an already modeled surface.

One feels, when looking back from such a late work to the much earlier yakṣīs of the Mathurā school of the second century A.D. that, essentially, the general features of feminine beauty have scarcely changed in India through the centuries; and yet the type found in other works of the South is dramatically different from that of the North. This cannot be explained as the result of a general evolution in the Indian ideal of woman; neither is it a consequence of the special conditions and possibilities of the metalwork technique. It derives simply from the fact that there is here involved another population (that of Southern India), another ethnic group (the

Dravidian), and that this race is portraying its own women in its divinities. Noses with a markedly thin ridge, long, and set in oblong faces; thin, long arms and legs; very slender upper thighs: these are the prominent anatomical traits. And the eyes, slightly bulging, in the form of oval bubbles, resemble, according to the local metaphor, the eyes of fish. "The Fish-Eyed One," Mīnākṣī, is a favorite epithet of the goddess in South India, celebrating this much appreciated detail of beauty. The chief temple at Madura, which is one of the most magnificent examples of religious architecture in the late medieval period, is dedicated to Śiva and his goddess under her name of Mīnākṣī.

The contour of the hips of the female forms greatly varies in the art of the South, sometimes following the traditional outline, emphasizing breadth and weight, sometimes exhibiting an extraordinarily slender grace, corresponding to the actual, rather delicate and slim figures of the women of the region. Such an image as that of the Pārvatī is striking for the vitality of its refined realism and its almost portraitlike vivacity. The hips show no suggestion of the traditional ideal and are as remote as possible from the usual type of the North. Consider in contrast the yakṣī. The upper part of this pillar-relief once formed part of a stone railing around a stūpa, probably built in the Kuṣāna-Amarāvatī period of the second century A.D. It depicts the balcony of a palace in the blissful realm of the yakṣas, and one sees there a divine couple—inmates of the yakṣa realm, in amorous dalliance, enjoying the sensual bliss of that paradise. Like Kubera, the king of yakṣas, this sumptuous beauty stands on a crouching human vāhana. She carries in her right hand the cage of a pet bird, and, laden with rich ornaments, wears immense anklets to mark with their tinkling the rhythm of her sensual gait. She is "burdened by the weight of her hips and thighs, and bent slightly forward with the weight of her breasts". Her walk resembles, according to constantly recurring Indian metaphors, "the gait of a swan or of a duck along the shore," also the heaving and swelling stride of an elephant as it passes, noiselessly and almost nimbly, with its massive form. In the fully blossoming body of this goddess of life-force and earthly welfare the characteristics of abundance, fertility, exuberance, and sex are emphasized. And yet she is not a mere geometrical symbol. She reflects an ideal of feminine beauty that still is evident in the living forms of women through the North of India.

The South, on the other hand, has had its own ideal. The figure shown of Pārvatī, the consort of Śiva, conforms to the traditional mould; yet the long, slender limbs pay full tribute to the type of the South. The shape and expression of the face are unmistakably Southern, with the long features and thin, pointed nose; and when

the image is viewed from the rear its departure from the traditional Northern pattern becomes still more apparent. One is reminded of the dancing girl of Mohenjo-daro, with her delicate, exceedingly slender, nearly sticklike legs.

This ideal of a delicate slimness, even verging on the bony and fleshless, inspired by the particular charm of the actual South Indian type of feminine beauty, was carried by the intractable boldness of the Hindu genius to a limit that borders on the grotesque in the daring masterpiece of Plate 422,[1] which is among the treasures of the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City. In its rigid attitude, stiffness and daring, the figure reminds one, at first sight, of a primitive idol; as though an archaic pattern had been rendered with the developed skill of a later period. But actually, this piece is one of the most sophisticated that India has produced.

From an agelong, fundamentally pre-Aryan inheritance the artists of the South derived a sophistication that keeps many of their most skillful and complex masterworks from being appreciated by the comparatively simple eyes of Occidental art criticism. Indeed, without that broadening of our Western aesthetic standards and ability to understand that was effected by the rise of Expressionism at the end of the nineteenth century and the parallel awakening of our appreciation for the highly stylized and abstract forms of the various primitive and Oriental arts, we should not have found it possible to recognize the boldness of this amazing image. A wholehearted departure on our part from the classical ideals and conventions that restricted our aesthetic history and understanding until the beginning of the present century was required before pieces of this kind could be exhibited in public museums—or even in private collections. A symbolic date for this spiritual crisis in modern Europe was the period around 1912, when Pablo Picasso began showing African figures along with his own abstract and daring works.

In the South Indian bronze of Plate 422 a radical departure from every suggestion of the Northern pattern, as well as from the neolithic tradition, has been achieved. Or perhaps one should say that this is not a departure, since the Northern models seem never to have exercised any influence on the local ideology from which this curious and precious piece derives. In Hindu poetry, and in the sacred writings, we find feminine beauty celebrated with tiring monotony and in endless repetitions, but never with any hint of such an ideal as this. The usual Indian description of a beautiful woman is about like the following, chosen at random from a religious text celebrating the charms of Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa's chief mistress when he

[1] The plates referred are to the original volumes.

was a youth among the cowherds: "She possesses solid breasts, great buttocks, a narrow waist. She is bending with the very weight of her buttocks, solid loins, and elevated breasts. Her nose puts to shame the beak of the prince of birds." Of all these fair attributes the present figure exhibits only the last—but that to a most remarkable, even obtrusive, degree. The others have been replaced by their opposites. And this brings us to the special meaning of this amazing image.

Kālī is the goddess represented, and she has cymbals in both hands, which means that she is paying worship to some god. But who, we may ask, can be the god whose favor is courted by Kālī, as by a devotee? Kālī, the Great Goddess, is the highest feminine principle in the universe. The answer to the question, therefore, must be Śiva Mahādeva, the Great God, the supreme male.

III. Early Dravidian Temples

Dr. Charles Fabri, after his long study of Indian Art concludes that the Art of the South has been neglected. The following brief extract is from page 20 of his book, *An Introduction to Indian Architecture*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963.

It has become increasingly clear to serious scholars that we have been making a great mistake by concentrating so much on Northern Indian art history only. It is now proved that South India, far from lagging behind the North in development, or copying Northern prototypes, has often been in the forefront of stylistic development; in any case, sculpturally and architecturally, South India has always been at least level with Northern developments.

This certainly is true of the Buddhist period. Sculptural and architectural remains—stūpas and monasteries—at Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda (both in Andhra State) and other sites, are as old as any Buddhist remains found in the North; the earliest images, e.g. go back to the 3rd century B.C., and these sites in Andhra take on the lead in the period from the 1st century B.C. to 4th century A.D.

So far as the earliest Hindu temples are concerned, here too a great error had crept into our art histories. It has been, quite wrongly, surmized that the rock-cut temples, the "Five-Rathas," of Mamallapuram[1] (near Madras), date from about A.D. 600 or later; their actual date, however, is the 5th century A.D., the purely classic

[1] The name "Mahabalipuram" is a popular modern distortion.

period. As such, they must be reckoned among the most valuable survivals of the classic times.

IV. *Dravidian Architecture*

Not many monuments exist in the Tamil country as evidences of early architecture and sculpture. One can only argue from existing monuments of the Pallava period that they are developments and reproductions in stone of earlier monuments which were of wood or of brick. T. R. SESHA IYENGAR, in *Dravidian India*, Madras, 1925, pages 120 to 123, argues that the early Dravidians were advanced in the art of architecture.

SOUTH INDIA CANNOT show buildings of unquestionable antiquity. Nevertheless, South India might have possessed them in the hoary past, and their disappearance might have been due to the perishable nature of the materials used and the destructive power of a hot, damp climate and superabundant insect life. According to Dr. Slater,[1] the earliest extant temples of the South show their indebtedness to a more ancient architectural art and tradition. They display the utmost elaboration of ornament. "This must have been worked up slowly through centuries by workers in more manageable materials, so that the earliest builders of temples and palaces of stone, instead of first experimenting in simple forms and gradually adding ornament to ornament, attempted from the beginning a height of elaboration never reached elsewhere in material of the same character." The result as in the Madurā Temple is vastly impressive. There is nothing in North India, says Dr. Slater, equal to the sumptuous greatness and elaboration of the magnificent South Indian temples.

Certainly, it may be easily conceded that the remains of Dravidian architecture existing in the South at the present day are more extensive, more elaborate, and more impressive than those of the Aryans in the North. The magnificent Stupa of Amarāvatī and the marvellous rock-cut temples at Mahābaḷipūr may have been produced in later ages under Brahmanical or Buddhist influence, but they are a natural development of strictly indigenous art. According to Sir John Marshall, the Aryans were much indebted to the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India in the domain of art. It is in the South of India, in the Amarāvatī sculptures, that we find the richest, most rhythmical, and most imaginative designs. It is here again we find the wonderful

[1] *Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*—Dr. Slater, pp. 66-68.

decorative charm which pervades Indian art. India is indebted for her natural and inborn love of ornamental design to the Dravidian or pre-Aryan people. In the opinion of this celebrated archaeologist, the Indo-Aryans were destitute of natural artistry, and they did not know how to articulate their ideas with the chisel or the brush. But once their race had been blended with the Dravidian, the mixed stock, which resulted from the union, found itself possessed of the means of putting its thoughts into visible concrete form.[2] It must be admitted that the ancient Aryans were indebted to the Dravidians for their knowledge of architecture. Numerous hymns in the Rig Veda show that the walled cities which excited the cupidity and envy of the Aryans were mostly owned by the aboriginal Asuras; and there is not quite as much said of lordly edifices constructed by the Aryans themselves. At a later age, Vyasa in the Mahabharata acknowledges that the great palace of Yudhishtira was built by a Dānava, Maya by name, who had been overcome by Arjuna in battle, and an admission like this in a work apparently intended to extol the greatness of the Aryans to the skies is of considerable importance.

In this connection the remarks of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore may be found interesting. He says, "Let no one imagine that the non-Aryan contributions had no value of their own. As a matter of fact, the old Dravidian culture was by no means to be despised, and the result of its combination with the Aryan, which formed the Hindu civilization, acquired both richness and depth under the influence of its Dravidian component. Dravidians might not be introspective or metaphysical, but they were artists, and they could sing, design, and construct. The transcendental thought of the Aryan, by its marriage with the emotional and creative art of the Dravidian, gave birth to an offspring, which was neither fully Aryan nor Dravidian, but Hindu."[3]

Fergusson offers very weighty observations on this much-vexed question of Dravidian architecture. The Aryan races in his opinion are not builders. They had too firm a conviction of the immortality of the soul and consequently of the existence of a future state ever to care much for a brick or stone immortality in this world; and no material art ever satisfied the cravings of their higher intellectual powers. Fergusson adds, 'The Turanians on the contrary never rose to a distinct idea of an external God or of a future state, but supplied the place of the latter by metempsychosis and final annihilation, while their intellectual status never enabled them to create such a

[2] Sir George Birdwood Memorial Lecture on 'Influence of Race on Early Indian Art'—Sir John Marshall.

[3] "A vision of India"—*Viswa Bharathi Quarterly*, No. 1.

literature as would satisfy that hankering after immortality which is inherent in the human breast.'

V. The Ritual Dance

There is abundant evidence in Tamil classical literature for the ritualistic origin of some of the Fine Arts. The dance which originated with shamanistic rites culminates in the solo performance described in the *Epic of the Anklet*. The following reading mainly about ritual dances is from V. R. RAMACHANDRA DIKSHITAR'S *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, University of Madras, 1930, pages 290-294.

THAT DANCING WHICH went by different names, *āṭṭam*, *kūttu*, *kunippu*, was a recognized mode of amusement among the ancient Tamils is evident. In fact dancing was a marked feature of every incident in the life of the ancient people. It was a sure accompaniment of every joy of life and a means of efficacy in prayer. From the earliest available literature, the *Tolkāppiyam*, we can gather that dancing was a primitive institution indulged in by all classes of people. From the *sūtras* (60 and 76) it is obvious that there were two kinds of dancing named *Vaḷḷikkūttu* and *Kalanilaikkūttu*. *Vaḷḷikkūttu* is perhaps in honour of Vaḷḷi, the consort of God Murugan, the War-God. This *kūttu* was popular among the lower classes of society. *Kalanilaikkūttu* was of a higher order. This *kūttu* was arranged in honour of a young soldier who stood boldly in the front rank of the army and offered stout fight while others retreated. On his victorious return, it was usual that his friends presented him with what is known as *vīrakkalal* an anklet, and indulged in a dance. Besides these two *kūttus* there was one other which was known as *āṭal*. The *sūtra* (60) of the *Puṟattiṇaiyiyal* refers to *Velanveṟiyāṭal*. The chief feature of this dance was to offer *bali* or animal sacrifice to the God Muruga, and in the course of such worship, one got possessed with the spirit of the God and began to dance. Others in the crowd responded by joining in it. Generally it was held with a view to find out the nature of the trouble which a certain person was ailing from and also to get at some remedy for the same. There was another kind of *āṭal* which forms one of the twelve *tuṟais* under the sub-division of *tumbaittiṇai* in the section on the *Puṟattiṇaiyiyal* of the *Tolkāppiyam*. It points to one method of celebrating a fellow-king who has fallen dead heroically in the field of action. It was a custom then that when once the king who led the host fell in battle, to whatever side he might belong, other kings stopped the fight, surrounded the dead

body, and honoured it by a kind of dancing in which skilled sword play was a feature.

Thus we see that both ritual dancing and war-dance were characteristic features of the Śangam age as is evidenced by the *Tolkāppiyam*. From the rude methods of *āṭṭam* and *kūttu* which were of different kinds, there evolved perhaps a kind of dumb show in which ideas were expressed by different postures and gestures. This became in course of time popular, and began to stay as an institution. Though there was a development in the art of dancing, still the old kinds of *kūttu* and others died hard. They continued to exist side by side with the new institution.

Ritual dance, for example, is prominently mentioned in the accredited Śangam works. It was inseparably connected with primitive modes of worship, much older than the epoch of the *Tolkāppiyam*. We have already seen it referred to by the grammarian. The references to it in the *Kuṛuntogai*, *Maduraikkāñci* and the *Śilappadikāram* show its popularity even in the Śangam age. Especially the worship of Murugan and Māyon had the dance as a relieving feature of the occasion. So also the worship of Koṛṛavai (Durgā). The ritual dance associated with the worship of Murugan went by the names of *veṛiyāṭal* and *velanāṭal*. The priest who bore the *vel*, a spear, in his hands and who was a symbolic representative of the Velan, another name for the War-God, offered worship to the God Muruga in the then accepted ways. The method by which the God is invited to partake of the *bali* offering is described in an ode in the *Kuṛuntogai*.[1] That the *bali* offering consisted chiefly of cooked rice and the meat of a sheep is evident from the *Maduraikkāñci*.

The religious dance bound up with the worship of Viṣṇu goes by the name of *Kuḍam*.[1] It is a form of ancient worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa. These dances were primarily conducted by the members of the cowherd community. One example of this is found in the *Maduraikkāṇḍam* of the *Śilappadikāram*. When the Pāṇḍyan king pronounced death sentence on the innocent Kovalan and he was killed, there were innumerable bad omens which indicated some impending calamity. The cowherd-women noticed these and began to pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa to avert the danger. The form of prayer is known as *Kuravaikkūttu*. It is a peculiar form of dance wherein either seven or nine women engage each joining her hands to those of another. It was not a mere dumb show for the women engaged in this dance also sang in praise of the Lord. Another example of the *Kuravaikkūttu* is found in the same classical work. After Kaṇṇaki lost her husband, she left the city and went in the western direction along the *Vaigai*

[1] 362.

until she reached a hill in which was situated the village of Veḍuvar. She stood underneath a *veṅgai* tree where the Veḍuvar in large numbers waited on her. At that time Kovalan appeared in divine form and took her away. This incident took those present on the occasion by surprise and they decided to venerate Kaṇṇaki as a goddess. In her honour they engaged in *Kuravaikkūttu* accompanied by music. The *Śilappadikāram* refers to another kind of ritual dance in connection with the worship of Koṟṟavai, the Goddess of Victory. This dance is called the *Veṭṭuvavari* described in the opening lines of the canto xii. Here the person who offers worship is not the priest but the priestess of the Maṟava tribe. In the middle of the high street of the village, the priestess danced, as if possessed by the goddess, to the great surprise of those present.[3] She predicted what disasters awaited the village and how they could be averted. The same work refers to the dance of Śiva immediately after the burning of the Tripuram. It is known as *Koḍukoṭṭi* or simply *Koṭṭi*. Why this dance came to be known by this name is thus explained by the commentator Aḍiyārkkunallār. After having set fire to the Three Cities and when they were in flames, the Lord would not show mercy. On the other hand, He was so happy that he clapped His hands and indulged Himself in a dance.[8] Iḷango-Aḍigaḷ gives a fascinating description of this dance.

VI. The King of Dancers

The concept of Śiva Natarāja in his role as cosmic dancer (ananda tandava) must have developed as a result of the place that ritualistic dance obtained in early Dravidian religion. The following reading is from HEINRICH ZIMMER's, *The Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. I, pages 122 to 123.

ŚIVA NATARAJA, THE King of Dancers, in his manifestation as Nṛtya-mūrti, is the cosmic dancer. He is here the embodiment and manifestation of the eternal energy in five activities (*pañca-kriyā*): (1) creation, pouring forth, unfolding (*sṛṣṭi*), (2) maintenance or duration (*sthiti*), (3) destruction or taking back (*saṁhāra*), (4) concealing, veiling, hiding the transcendental essence behind the garb of apparitions (*tirobhāva*), and (5) favoring, bestowing grace through a manifestation that accepts the devotee (*anugraha*). The god is dancing on

[3] See also *Puṟam*, 259.
[8] *Silap.*, canto vi, 43 *naḍukaṟkāḍal*.

the dwarfish body of the demon *Apasmāra puruṣa,* "forgetfulness, loss of memory"—called in Tamil *Muyalaka*—who represents ignorance, the destruction of which brings enlightenment, true wisdom, and release from the bondage of existences.

Śiva's upper right hand carries a small drum, shaped like an hourglass; for sound was the first element to evolve in the unfolding of the universe, sound being the characteristic of ether (according to the Indian view), which is the most subtle form of cosmic matter. The upper left hand, in *ardhacandra-mudrā* (the half-moon gesture), bears a tongue of flame: the element of the final destruction of the universe. Thus in two of the hands are symbolized the balance of creation and destruction. The lower right hand, in *abhaya-mudrā* (the fear-not gesture), bestows protection, while the lower left, in the *gaja-hasta* posture—imitating the outstretched trunk (*hasta*) of the elephant (*gaja*)—points to the lifted foot as the refuge or salvation of the devotee. This foot should be worshipped, in order to gain union with the god and therewith enlightenment; for whereas the right foot, planted on the back of the demon Forgetfulness, symbolizes Śiva's world-creative driving of life-monads into the sphere of matter, the lifted left symbolizes their release. The two feet thus denote the continuous circulation of consciousness into and out of the conditon of ignorance.

The ring of fire surrounding the figure (*prabhā maṇḍala*) symbolizes the dance of nature (*prakriti*), which is the life-process of the universe and its creatures, and within there is taking place eternally the dance of the prime mover, the Lord God. According to the ascetic Hīnayāna Buddhist doctrine, this dance of nature is to be extinguished. According to the Śivaite view, on the other hand, it is not different from the dance of wisdom-knowledge, since it is itself a reflex of the trancendental being of God.

The whole form, finally, may be read as the mystic syllable OM or AUM, which in the Devanāgarī alphabet is written ओं or ॐ and which is the totality of the world and psyche in the four states of awareness known as (1) being awake, (2) being in dream, (3) being in dreamless sleep, and (4) being reintegrated in the pure, transcendental essence of divine reality. Each of these four states is expressed in one of the four parts of AUM: respectively in *a, u, m,* and the following silence.

We have already noted the resemblance of the posture of the Dancing Śiva to that of the dancer of Harappā. The probability of an actual connection is great, since the Dravidians were in possession of the Deccan centuries before the Christian era. Linguistically they seem to belong to the Turanian group who occupied southern and eastern Persia in pre-Aryan times. The historical perspective

that opens is prodigious; for the roots of this group are lost in the deep neolithic, while its branches, broadly proliferated, show their forms among the dancing tribesmen of Oceania no less than among the Basques of the western Pyrenees.

VII. *Music*

The place that instrumental and vocal music obtained in the ancient period has been studied in treatises which are mostly in Tamil. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar here summarises the data available in classical literature concerning music and musical instruments, *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, pages 296 to 300.

There was no dancing if there was no singing. In other words singing was an accompaniment of dancing, secular or religious. The popular name given to music in ancient literature is *iśai.* The traditional account of the three Śangams contained in the commentary of the *Iṛaiyanār Ahapporuḷ* mentions the names of ancient treatises on music like *Iśainuṇukkam, Siṟṟiśai,* the *Mudu-nārai, Mudu-kurugu,* the *Periśai* which are now unfortunately lost to us. The mention of these ancient books is itself an evidence of the antiquity of the institution of music.

Singing may be vocal or instrumental or both. A number of musical instruments are referred to in the Śangam literature, *iśaikkaruvi* being the general term. Four kinds of instruments are distinguished —*toṛkaruvi* made of leather, *tuḷaikkaruvi* provided with holes, *narambukkaruvi* or stringed instruments and *midaṟṟukkaruvi* or throat-instruments.[1] *Kulal* or the flute was the chief wind-instrument and was of various kinds. There were also different forms of trumpets of which the *kombu* was the most popular. Among the leather instruments forming the varieties of the drum are the *paṛai, murasu, perikai* and others. Of the stringed instruments the *yāḷ* occupies a prominent place and is of different kinds. There is a very good description of the *yāl* in the *Porunarāṟṟuppaḍai*[2] and in another poem *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaḍai.*[3] A variety of tunes *paṇ, paṇṇiyaṟṟiṛam, tiṛam, tiṛattiṛam* was developed perhaps after each region. Peculiar and special measures were beaten as befitted the different occasions, such as war-music, marriage-music, music connected with dances

[1] See *Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture,* p. 40.
[2] ll. 4-18.
[3] ll. 4-16.

secular and religious, singing associated with festival, with death, etc. There was a class of bards of both sexes who were professional singers and musicians—*pāṇar, viṛalis,* etc. Most of them went from place to place dispensing music and thus earning their livelihood.[4]

The Tamilian genius for music is best illustrated by the *Śilappadi-kāram* where a whole canto[5] is devoted to various aspects of musical science. Besides the texts the commentary throws welcome light with-out which it is impossible to make out anything of ancient music. In this canto mention is made of two kinds of *kūttu*: *Ahakkūttu* and *Puṛakkūttu* and eleven kinds of *āṭal.* Then, a number of musical in-struments are mentioned as well as the qualifications of a musi-cian and a composer of songs. The musician exhibited his skill either by playing on the *vīṇā* or flute, or singing vocally, but in all cases accompanied by the low-toned *mṛdangam* and similar instruments.

The commentator refers here to four kinds of *vīṇā—periyāl, ma-karayāl śakoḍayāl, sengoṭṭiyāl.* Speaking of the flute, five kinds are distinguished according to the materials of which the flute was made. It was made of bamboo, sandalwood, bronze, red catechu and ebony. Of these, that of bamboo is the best, that of bronze middling and those of sandal, etc. are of inferior quality. Here seven holes are made for seven *svaras*: *sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, da, ni,* and seven fingers are pressed into service when playing on the flute. The seven fingers are three of the left hand leaving out the thumb and the little finger, and four of the right hand leaving out the thumb.

Of the musical instruments which were accompaniments for any performance, thirty-one kinds are distinguished. Apparently all of them are made of leather.

The songster must possess the instinct to divide and expand the *svaras* by distinguishing the foreign from the indigenous. He and his assistants who are the drummer and others must be versed in *nāṭaka* literature which is divided into two parts, one probably relating to the king, and the other (*Poduviyal*) relating to the populace. The qualifications of a drummer, of a flutist and the *vīṇā* player are ela-borately explained. The drummer was to adjust his performance to that of the songster so that the latter might not feel the strain nor the audience. He was to supply the deficiencies by a process of de-crease and increase of his instrumental sound. His skill entirely de-pended on the continued practice.

The flutist is an expert in what is known as *cittirappunarppu* which is nasalizing the hard consonants in singing a musical piece. He must

[4] See *Perumpāṇāṛṛuppuḍai,* 11. 18-22.

[5] Canto iii.

so use his fingers that his playing is comfortable to the rules of the musical science.

The technicalities referred to in connection with a *vīṇā* performance are so subtle that it is difficult to render them in any other language. Of the fourteen *pālais* or tunes connected with this, skill consists in utilizing the seven tunes or airs at one and the same time. In conformity to these fourteen *pālais*, the sound was adjusted, four pertaining to the low key, seven equal, viz. neither low nor high, and three to the high pitch. From a study of this chapter it would appear that in the days of the *Śilappadikāram*, three kinds of musical performances were distinguished—the flute, the *vīṇā* and the vocal. These were served by a large number of accompanying instruments as occasion demanded.

VIII. Musical Instruments

H. A. Popley in his *Music of India*, Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, Calcutta, 1950 has also summarised the information to be had in early Tamil literature concerning musical instruments. The reading is taken from pages 10 to 12.

In the Tamil books *Puranānūru* and *Pattupāṭṭu* (*c.* A.D. 100-200) the drum is referred to as occupying a position of very great honour. It had a special seat called *murasukaṭṭil*, and a special elephant, and was treated almost as a deity. It is described as 'adorned with a garland like the rainbow'. One of the poets tells us, marvelling at the mercy of the king, 'how he sat unwittingly upon the drum couch and yet was not punished'. Three kinds of drums are mentioned in these books: the battle drum, the judgment drum, and the sacrificial drum. The battle drum was regarded with the same veneration that regiments used to bestow upon the regimental flag in the armies of Europe and the capture of the drum meant the defeat of the army. One poem likens the beating of the drum to the sound of a mountain torrent. Another thus celebrates the virtues of the drummer:

> For my grandsire's grandsire, his grandsire's grandsire
> Beat the drum. For my father, his father did the same.
> So he for me. From duties of his clan he has not swerved.
> Pour forth for him one other cup of palm tree's purest wine.[1]

[1] From *Pura-porul Veṇbā mālai*, Pope's translation.

The early Tamil literature makes much mention of music. The *Paripāḍal* (*c.* A.D. 100-200) gives the names of some of the *svaras* and mentions the fact of there being seven Pālai (ancient Dravidian modes). The *yāḷ* is the peculiar instrument of the ancient Tamil land.[2] No specimen of it exists today. It was evidently something like the *viṇā* but not the same instrument, as the poet Māṇikkavāchakar (*c.* A.D. 500-700) mentions both in such a way as to indicate two different instruments. Some of its varieties are said to have had over 1,000 strings. The *Silappaḍigāram* (A.D. 300), a Buddhist drama, mentions the drummer, the flute player, and the *viṇā* as well as the *yāḷ*, and also has specimens of early Tamil songs. This book contains some of the earliest expositions of the Indian musical scale, giving the seven notes of the gamut and also a number of the modes and rāgas in use at that time. The names given to the notes are not those current in the present day and are with one exception pure Tamil words. *Tivākaram,* a Jain lexicon of the same period, gives quite a lot of information about early Dravidian music. It mentions two kinds of rāgas; complete or heptatonic, and transilient or hexatonic and pentatonic, which were called respectively *Paṇ* and *Tiram;* it gives the twenty-two srutis, which it calls *mātra*; the Tamil names of the seven *svaras* with the equivalent Sanskrit sol-fa initials (Sa, Ri, Ga, etc.); the seven Dravidian modes called *Pālai;* four kinds of *Yāḷ* and the names of 29 *Paṇs,* some of which are still found among the primary rāgas of southern India. All this as well as frequent references to the science of music and to musical performances, both vocal and instrumental, in the Tamil books of this and succeeding periods makes it clear that musical culture had reached a high level among the Dravidian peoples of South India in the early centuries of our era.

The later centuries of the Buddhist period (A.D. 300-500) were more fertile in architecture, sculpture and painting than in music. The dramas of Kālidāsa (*c.* A.D. 400) make frequent references to music and evidently the rajahs of that time had regular musicians attached to their courts. In the *Mālavikāgnimitra* a song in four-time is mentioned as a great feat performed at a contest between two musicians. The development of the drama after Kālidāsa meant the development of music as well, as all Indian drama is operatic. 'The temple and the stage were the great schools of Indian music.'

This was the time when in Europe Pope Sylvester (A.D. 330) and St. Ambrose (A.D. 374-379) began to elaborate western musical theory.

[2] See p. 108.

Chapter Five

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

I. The Three Kingdoms

The political history of the early Tamil kingdoms can be drawn only in general outline because of the lack of historical documents. A concise statement of this early age from available sources has been made in *The Cambridge History of India*, Volume I, Chapter XXIV: "The Early History of Southern India". The author is the late L. D. BARNETT.

LONG BEFORE THE beginning of the Christian era the Dravidian south had developed a considerable culture of its own, and its inhabitants had consolidated themselves into powerful kingdoms, some of which carried on a thriving trade with western Asia, Egypt, and later with the Greek and Roman empires.[1] The chief of these were the three Tamil kingdoms, the Andhras, Kalingas and Mahārāshtra. The Tamils have retained more tenaciously than any of their kindred the ancient traditions of the proto-Dravidian race. True, they have written no histories until modern times; but they have preserved a large number of ancient poems relating to the exploits and administration of kings and princes in an age far earlier than the oldest existing literature of their Dravidian neighbours.

[1] The Tyrians apparently imported thence ivory, apes, and peacocks (Tamil *togai*) as we know from I Kings X, 22 and II Chronicles IX, 21. Somewhat later we find India—to a large extent Southern India—exporting pepper (Tamil *pippali*), rice (Tamil *arici*) ginger (Tamil *inji-ver*) and cinnamon (Tamil *karuppu* or *kārppu*), besides spices, precious stones, coral, pearls, cloth, muslin, silk, tortoise-shell, etc. See J. Kennedy, *The Early Commerce of India with Babylon*, *J.R.A.S.*, 1898, pp. 241 ff.

In the earliest time of which we have any record the *Tamilagam* or Tamil realm extended over the greater part of the modern Madras Presidency, its boundaries being on the north a line running approximately from Pulicat on the coast to Venkatagiri (Tirupati), on the east the Bay of Bengal, on the south Cape Comorin, and on the west the Arabian Sea as far north as the 'White Rock' near Badagara, to the south of Mahé. Malabar was included in it; the Malayālam language had not yet branched off as a separate tongue from the parent Tamil. It consisted of three kingdoms, those of the Pāṇḍyas, Coḷas and Cheras or Keralas. The Pāṇḍya kingdom comprised the greater part of the modern Madura and Tinnevelly Districts, and in the first century also southern Travancore, and had its capital originally at Kolkai (on the Tāmbraparni river in Tinnevelly), and later at Madura. The Choḷa region extended along the eastern coast, from the river Pennār to the Vellār, and on the west reaching to about the borders of Coorg. Its capital was Uraiyūr (Old Trichinopoly), and it had a great port at Kāviri-pattinam or Pugār, on the northern bank of the river Cauvery (Kāveri). Another of its chief towns was Kāñchī, now Conjeeveram. The Chera or Kerala territory comprised Travancore, Cochin, and the Malabar District; the Kongu-deça (corresponding to the Coimbatore District and the southern part of Salem District), which at one time was separate from it, was afterwards annexed to it. Its capital was originally Vañji (now Tiru-karūr, on the Periyār river, near Cochin), and later Tiru-vañjikkaḷam (near the mouth of the Periyār). It had important trading centres on the western coast at Toṇḍi (on the Agalappulai, about five miles north of Quilāndi), Muchiri (near the mouth of the Periyār), Palaiyūr (near Chowghāt), and Vaikkarai (close to Kottayam).

The races within these bounds were various. To the oldest stratum of pre-Dravidian blood probably belonged the savages termed by the ancient poets *Villavar* ('bowmen') and *Mīnavar* ('fishers'), of whom the former may possibly be identical with the modern Bhīls, while the latter may be descendants in the Mīnās. Another group is that termed by the poets *Nāgas*, a word which in Hindu literature commonly denotes a class of semi-divine beings, half men and half snakes, but is often applied by Tamil writers to a warlike race armed with bows and nooses and famous as free-booters. Several tribes mentioned in early literature are known with more or less certainty to have belonged to the *Nāgas*, among them being the Aruvāḷar (in the Aruvā-nāḍu and Aruvā-vaḍatalai around Conjeeveram), Eyinar, Maravar, Oḷiyar, and Paradavar (a fisher tribe). A race of uncertain affinity was that of the Āyar, who in many respects resembled the Abhīras of northern India, and seem to have brought

into the south the worship of the herdsman-god Kṛishṇa.

The overlords of the Tamil-agam were the descendants of the proto-Dravidian invaders, the Tamils in the strict sense of the term. They with the races subject to them formed the three kingdoms of the Pāṇḍyas, Choḷas, and Cheras, where the ruling element was the land-tilling class or Veḷḷālar, at the head of whom were the kings. The Pāṇḍya king claimed descent from a tribe styled Mārar, which however had for many years another important representative in the princes bearing the title Palaiyan Māran, 'the Ancient Māran,' whose capital was Mogūr, near the Podiya Hill, not far from Comorin. The Choḷa kings were alleged to belong to the tribe of Tiraiyar or 'Men of the Sea'; another Tiraiyan dynasty was reigning at Conjeeveram in the time of Karikāl Choḷa. The Chera kings in their turn were said to be of the Vānavar tribe. Lastly we may mention a tribe called Koçar, who may possibly belong to the Tamil race. From the references of the poets to them it would seem that they once made an unsuccessful attack on Mogūr, and found allies in the Vamba-Moriyar or 'Bastard Mauryas' (possibly a branch of the Konkani Mauryas). At one time—possibly in the first century A.D.—they seem to have wielded considerable authority in the Pāṇḍyan regions and Kongu-deça, and to have given some trouble to the Choḷas.

Even in the first century of the Christian era the south seems to have felt little influence from the Aryan culture of northern India, Some Brāhman colonies had made their way into the south, and in a few cases Brāhmans had gained there a certain position in literature and religion; but on the whole they counted for little in the life of the people, especially as their teachings were counterbalanced by the influence of the powerful Buddhist and Jain churches, and Dravidian society was still free from the yoke of the Brāhman caste-system.[2] Next to the *arivar* or sages, the highest place among the Tamils was held by the land-owning class, after whom ranked herdsmen, hunters, artisans, soldiers and at the bottom of the social scale fishers and scavengers. Government was under the supreme control of the kings; but they were considerably influenced by the 'Five Great Assemblies,' bodies representative of five classes of society.[3] Probably there was also some organisation of the pro-

[2] The tradition that the Brāhman sage Agastya led the first Aryan colony to the Podiya Hill and created Tamil literature probably arose in a later age, after Brāhman influences had gained the ascendant in the south, on the basis of the legends in the Sanskrit epics.

[3] The actual constitution of these *Aim-berun-gulu* is rather uncertain. They are said to have been composed of ministers, chaplains, generals, commissioners,

vinces for local administration, as we find in historical times that each shire or *nāḍu* was divided into village communities and its representatives met in a shire-mote of several hundred men representing the families of the *nāḍu,* which possessed considerable power in the control of local affairs.

Before the first century of the Christian era there are very few allusions in the literature and historical records of other nations that testify to the vigorous life of these southern kingdoms. Of the evidence of their commerce with the west we have already spoken. Megasthenes, who visited the court of Chandragupta the Maurya towards the end of the fourth century B.C., has left on record some rumours concerning them, including a legend that Heracles (i.e. the god Çiva) put the south under the rule of his daughter 'Panḍaia'. The Sanskrit epics mention them vaguely, as foreign lands outside their purview, though the legendary connexion of the Pāṇḍyan kings of Madura with the Pāṇḍava heroes of the Mahābhārata seems to have been acknowledged in the north as early as the second century B.C., if any reliance is to be placed on the scholion to Pāṇini IV, 1,168. Açoka in his inscriptions speaks of them among the foreign nations who have accepted the teachings of Buddhism.[4] Lastly, (Strabo xv, 4, 73) makes mention of an embassy sent to Augustus Caesar about the year 22 B.C. by a king 'Pandion,' possibly a Pāṇḍya of the Tamil country. Even in the next century the history of the Tamils is sadly obscure. Ancient Tamil poems and the commentaries upon them, supplemented by meagre notices in Pliny and other western writers, are almost the only sources of information, and their data are very uncertain.

II. Territorial Divisions

S. KRISHNASWAMI AIYANGAR is a historian of South India who has left behind numerous studies on the early Tamil kingdoms. The following reading is taken from his *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture,* University of Calcutta, 1942, pages 62 to 67.

THE COUNTRY SOUTH of the Krishna was divided among

and secret agents (e.g. by Adiyārkku-nallār on *Cilapp'-adhikāram,* v. 157; but see *ibid.* on III, 126).

[4] The references in the edition of Senart are as follows: Cheras, G. II, XIII, K. II, Kh. II; Choḷas, G. II, J. II, K. XIII, Kh. II, XIII; Pāṇḍyas, G. J. II. K. XIII, Kh.II, XIII. The Choḷas also appear in the scholion on Pāṇini IV, 1. 175 (possibly dating from the second century B.C.).

'the three crowned Kings' and seven chieftains, with an eighth coming somewhat later. There were a host of minor chieftains of lesser dignity. It is the coast region and the more open country that belonged to the kings, while the middle regions of hills and forests belonged to the chieftains, and perhaps even a few tribes (Nāgas and others). The east coast from Pulikat to the south of Toṇḍi in the Zemindari of Ramnad, belonged to the Chola, although midway between the kingdom proper and its northern viceroyalty of Kānchi lay the hill-country round Tirukkovilūr in the possession of a class of chieftains named Malayamān; and between his territory and the coast were the chieftains of Oymā-nāḍu very often loyal supporters of their suzerain, occasionally turbulent and rebellious. South of the Chola kingdom lay that of the Pāṇḍya, which extended from coast to coast, and embraced within its borders the modern districts of Madura and Tinnevelly, and the State of Travancore, taking in also a part of Coimbatore and Cochin. This included in it the chieftaincies of Āay (The Aioi of Ptolemy) round the Podiyil hill in the Western Ghats and the domains of Pehan round the Palnis which come under their sphere of influence as well. North of this and along the Western Ghats on the sea-side lay the territory of the Chera; a territory stretching right across the Palghat gap through Salem and Coimbatore. South Mysore was parcelled out among a number of chieftains corresponding to the modern Pāḷayagars, whose allegiance was at the disposal of either, but the more powerful of their neighbour kings. Such were the Irungo of Araiyam, Pāri of Parambunāḍ (west of the Kaveri in Kongu), Adiyamān of Tagaḍuṛ (Dharmapuri) and Ori of the Koḷḷimalais. The first of these was within the Mysore territory proper and to the east of his domain lay the Gangas, and Kongu to the south. The northern frontier of the Tamil land was held by Nannan of the Tuḷu country and Konkaṇ in the west, and Pulli of Vengaḍam (Tirupati) in the east, the further north having been the land of the Vaḍukar and Danḍāraṇyam (Sans. Danḍakāraṇyam).

These chieftaincies were the bone of contention between the Cholas and the Cheras. When the period under treatment begins, the Cholas were supreme under Karikāla, who ascended the throne, probably after defeating the Chera and Pāṇḍya in a battle at Veṇṇil (Koilveṇṇi as it is now called) in the Tanjore District. He was a remarkable sovereign who in many ways contributed to the permanent welfare of his subjects, and has consequently been handed down to posterity as a beneficent and wise monarch. He constructed the embankments for the Kaveri, and his chief port Puhār was the great emporium of the east coast. His reign was long, and, taken along with those of his two predecessors and the successor next-

following him, constitutes the period of the first Chola ascendancy in the south. In the reign of his successor a great catastrophe befell Puhār, and the city and port were both destroyed. This was a hard blow to the ascendancy of the Cholas. But Karikāla had, after defeating his contemporary Chera, given probably one of his daughters (it is just possible a sister) in marriage to the son of his vanquished rival. This alliance stood the Cholas in good stead. Karikāla's successor began his reign with a victory, which his heir-apparent won for him, against the Chera and Pāṇḍya combined at Kāriyār, probably in the Salem District.[1] When Puhār was destroyed, at least in part, there was a civil war owing perhaps to the untimely death of the young Chola prince; and the Chera ruler for the time being advanced through the central region. He intervened in favour of his cousins with effect, as against the rival claimants of royal blood, and restored the Chola dynasty to some power; but the ascendancy surely enough passed from them to the Chera. The Chera ascendancy under the 'Red Chera' (Śeṅguṭṭuvan) lasted only one generation. In the reign of his successor the Pāṇḍyas rose to greater importance, and the Chera suffered defeat and imprisonment at his hands. This Pāṇḍya ascendancy probably lasted on somewhat longer till about the rise of the Pallavas in Kāñchī. This course of the political centre of gravity in southern India is borne out in very important particulars by the Ceylon Chronicle called the Mahāvaṁśa. According to this work, the Cholas were naturally the greatest enemies of the Singalese rulers. There were usurpers from the Chola country in Ceylon in the first century B.C.; and there were invasons and counter-invasions as well. On one occasion the Chola invaders carried away 12,000 inhabitants of Ceylon and set them to work at 'the Kaveri' as the Chronicle has it.[2] This looks very much like an exploit of Karikāla seeing that it was he who either built the city of Puhār, or greatly extended it. King Gajabāhu of Ceylon[3] was present at the invitation of the Red-Chera, to witness the celebration . . . of a sacrifice and the consecration of the temple to the 'Chaste Lady' (Pattini Devī) at Vanji on the west coast.

The ascendancy of the Chera, however, passed away as already mentioned, to the Pāṇḍyas in the course of one single generation. The Red-Chera was succeeded by his son or successor, "the Chera of the elephant look," who was his predecessor's viceroy at Toṇḍi, and figured prominently in his wars in the middle region. He was defeated and taken prisoner in a battle, which he had to fight with

[1] It is shown to be the river Kāleṛn which falls into the Svarnamukhi near Kāḷahasti. See the authors' work *Maṇimèkhalai in its Historical Setting.*

[2] Upham's *Mahāvaṁśa,* Vol. i. p. 228.

[3] *Śilappadhikāram,* canto 30, l. 160, apart from the prologue.

the contemporary Pāndyan, designated the victor at Talaiyālanganam. With this mishap to the ruler the Chera ascendancy passes away. The Pāndyans of Madura take their turn now, and continued to hold the position of hegemony up to the time that the Pallavas rise into importance. This, in brief and in very general terms, was the political history of south India at the beginning and during the early centuries of the Christian era.

III. Maritime Character

The geographical position of the Tamil kingdoms and their maritime borders have influenced their political, social and commercial history. K. M. Panikkar has examined this factor from a geopolitical angle in his study *Geographical Factors in Indian History,* Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1955. The reading is from pages 62 to 65.

It is not the Vindhyas and the tableland alone that separate Aryavarta from the Deccan. The main differentiating characteristic is the attitude towards the sea. To the people of North India, with their Central Asian traditions, the sea meant very little. Their conception of politics is well expressed by Kalidasa, who describes the ideal kings of the Raghu Dynasty as *Āsamudra Kshitiesānām*— rulers whose territory extended to the shores of the sea. The idea of ruling the seas, far less of ruling lands across the seas, never entered the minds of the monarchs of the North while it was a normal conception with the Kalingas, the Cholas and the Pandyas. This is not to say that the Aryans after their arrival in India did not become familiar with the sea or with maritime navigation, but to them population movements, political power, etc., were bounded by the sea. In South India on the other hand population movements and cultural developments would seem to have been determined by the sea. The prehistoric finds at Maski in Mysore and other centres establish maritime relationships with the West, the Arabian Sea coast and the Mediterranean basin, while the prevalence of Austric languages even today and the continuance of kinship systems among the Dravidian populations similar to those of Polynesians indicate population and culture movement from the Pacific. The prevalence of the forms of Austric language in the Nicobars and its spread not only to different parts of India but to Madagascar, where it was powerful enough to establish a permanent dominance, are evidences of large-scale population and culture movements from the Pacific. The Polynesian origin of the dominant racial groups in Madagascar is generally

accepted now and a movement on so vast a scale could not have left South India untouched. In fact Mrs. Irawati Karve in her recent work which deals exhaustively with kinship organisation among Aryan and Dravidian races, establishes the fact that the kinship system of the Dravidian peoples, and even of the Marathas who have been Sanskritised in their language, bear striking similarity to the system prevalent in Polynesia. This, together with such other evidences as the introduction of the outrigged canoe, and the coco-nut, from the Pacific islands would seem to establish the fact that the racial and cultural relationships of South India were with the oceanic people even in prehistoric times. Mrs. Karve seems to hold the view that the dominant peoples of South India who originated in the Pacific were moving towards the North and occupying the tableland when the Aryans were settling down in the Punjab and expanding into the Gangetic Valley and the two peoples met and mixed only in Gujarat where she has been able to find surviving traces of the Polynesian social culture. The momentum of both these parallel movements having broken down long before they reached the Deccan, the two people seem never to have met racially, though in historic times, Hindu religion and Sanskrit culture attained a pre-eminence which gave a top layer of Aryanism to these peoples.

Sylvain Levi has pointed out that the sea routes to the East from the ports of South India had come into common use many centuries before the Christian era. When we come to the historic times, the maritime character of India's peninsular civilsation becomes even clearer. Early Tamil literature is replete with allusions to maritime trade. In a Tamil classic of the first century A.D. Kaveripattanam, the great port at the mouth of the river Cauvery is described thus: "The sun shone over the open terraces, over the warehouses near the harbour and over the turrets with windows like the eyes of deer. In different places of Puhar the onlooker's attention was arrested by the sight of the abode of Yavana whose prosperity never waned. At the harbour were to be seen sailors from distant lands". That this was not merely poetic imagery has now been proved by the excava-tions at Arikamedu. An extensive trading centre with large ware-houses for foreign merchants has been brought to light where apart from other interesting things, dated Roman potery has been dis-covered. According to the *Cambridge Ancient History* Italy im-ported more from India than from any other country except Spain. Pliny computes Rome's annual payment to India at 550 million sesterces, and the yearly loss to Rome in the balance of trade at 100 millions.

It is also necessary to emphasise that unlike the Northern kings who were *Āsamudra Kshitisās,* kings whose territories extended to

the sea, the Southern rulers always proclaimed maritime dignities. Thus the Andhra kings assumed the title of *Tri Samudradhipati* while even up to modern times the Zamorins of Calicut described themselves as the sovereigns of the mountains and the sea. From the ports of the East Coast a regular colonisation, as we know, was undertaken of the islands of Indonesia and cf the territories of South Asia. Periplus mentions threc ports in the Tamil country of which Kaveripattanam was the centre, as the places from which great ships which he calls *Colandia* sailed to the islands of the Pacific. Ptolmey also notes the ports to the North of Chicacol as centres of navigation to Malaya and the Archipelago. We have also the authority of the Chinese pilgrim, Itsing, for the statement that there were direct sailings from Negapatam to Kedah in Malaya. While there is no doubt that other areas also shared in this work of colonisation, the very fact that Chola, Pandya, Pallava and Malayala are names for tribes inhabiting certain areas of Sumatra clearly establishes the direct relationship between the South Indian kingdoms and the colonists of Indonesia.

That the political history of the southern kingdoms in historical times has been connected more with Ceylon and Farther India than with any kingdoms North of the Vindhyas is also a well-established fact. In fact both the Pandya and Chola kings were engaged in intermittent warfare with the Sri Vijaya monarchs for over a century and a half. The Chola emperor Rajendra in A.D. 1007 led in person an expedition against Sri Vijaya, captured Kedah and established Chola power on the Malaya Peninsula. Over 120 years later the Sri Vijaya king, Chandra Bahu, in turn, attacked Ceylon in alliance with the Pandya ruler. These facts may indicate the extent to which the southern kingdoms were connected politically with the states across the seas.

IV. The Chieftaincies

Parts of the Tamil country were ruled by chieftains who were either independent or were bound by allegiance to one or other of the three kings. Several of these chieftains are mentioned in the early poetry, viz: Aay, Paari, Oori, Kaari, etc. Probably the three kingdoms evolved from early chieftaincies. K. N. SIVARAJA PILLAI emphasises the importance of the early chieftaincies in his book, *The Chronology of the Early Tamils,* University of Madras, 1932. The reading is from pages 192 to 194.

IN ALL PROBABILITY, the earliest form of Tamil rule, of which we are afforded some glimpses here and there in this literature, was a sort of communal republic wherein each adult male member of the community had a voice in the direction of public affairs. Although we discover the Pāṇḍiya and the Chera rulers as full-fledged kings, the origin of the Chola line of sovereigns throws considerable light on the primitive communal republics. The people seem to have existed as village communities under the direction of Kilārs or the village elders. The eldest member of the family had the direction of affairs in his hands, assisted of course by the village assembly periodically convoked. The term 'Kilamai' means right of possession. This abstract concept is undoubtedly a later growth and should have denoted at first the right of the village elders or Kilavar. In course of time, the village communities grew in number and size and then they held together as a union or confederacy of a number of such communities presided over by a Veḷ, Ko or king. This Veḷ or Ko had a number of Kilārs under him each representing a village. Though the Kilārs and Veḷs were the executive heads and presidents of their respective village assemblies and confederacies, their powers were probably very limited in peace time by the authority of the general assemblies of the villages. This type of political organisation was wholly the result of the peaceful and settled condition of an agricultural community, organised for peaceful pursuits. It is to these early types of communal republics that the Aśoka's edict refers. No name of an individual king is therein mentioned in the south, as in the case of the western sovereigns. They are called the Cholas, the Palayas, the Keraḷaputras and the Satiyaputras, all communal names beyond doubt. It would be highly unhistorical to read the type of princely autocracies evolved later on in the Tamil land into the early conditions of the third century B.C. All that is intended to be conveyed here is that the Tamil autocracies depicted in these works were certainly preceded by another type of political organisation which was peculiarly republican and Dravidian in its character. By the time of the generations comprised in the Tables the old organisation had well-nigh lost its original vigour and a process of dissolution had set in. For territorial expansion the peaceful agricultural communities seem to have placed themselves under leaders of military genius, who later on turned into autocrats, pure and simple, and robbed the communities of their original rights and powers. In short, independence was the heavy price the communities had to pay, for the doubtful advantage of new territorial acquisitions. This is the picture we get from the earliest references bearing on the Chola rule.

V. The Tamils and the Early History of Ceylon

It is not possible to state when the first Tamil kingdom was established in Ceylon. Kuveni, and the Yakkhas who are supposed to have inhabited Ceylon in the pre-Vijayan period, if the account of the *Mahavamsa* is credible, may have been Dravidians who were belittled by the monastic chroniclers in the same way as the Dravidians are ridiculed in early vedic literature. S. ARASARATNAM in his book *Ceylon* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964) pieces together the historical evidence available for the presence of Tamils in Ceylon during the first centuries of the Sinhalese occupation of central and south Ceylon.

GEOLOGICALLY, CEYLON IS a part of peninsular India. They both stand on the same continental shelf. The sea that separates the two land masses came into existence, geologically speaking, in recent times and is only about 15 fathoms in depth at the narrowest parts, where the distance is 30 to 50 miles. The island of Ceylon and its products were very well known, according to the earliest Tamil literature. Mantota, a port situated on the Ceylon side of the straits, was referred to and must have been a frequent port of call of Tamil traders. As the history of both regions in the pre-Sinhalese period is still the subject of speculation, nothing specific can be said regarding contact between them. Archaeological work in some megalithic remains in the Deccan and far south is throwing new light on the spread of what may be the early Dravidian peoples into southern India in the first millennium B.C. Urn burials found in a site north of Puttalam seem to be similar to those found at Adichchanallur in Tamil Nad. Could this megalithic parent of the later Dravidian civilization have spread to Ceylon, and could this have been the culture that existed in Ceylon when the Aryans landed there?

Whether this be so or not, there is no doubt that at the time of Aryan colonization of Ceylon the inhabitants of the Tamil country played an important role in the establishment of this civilization. This historical fact is recorded in Sinhalese tradition in many ways. The legendary hero Vijaya found brides for himself and his followers in the Pandyan kingdom. Artisan families came from there to serve as craftsmen. A few centuries later there is more definite evidence of the presence and, indeed, the increasing influence of the Tamil. In the third century B.C. two Tamils described as horse traders were able to seize the throne from the Sinhalese royal line and hold power for a period of 22 years. Yet another Tamil, Elara, said to

be of the Chola line, seized and held power at Anuradhapura for 44 years. He was defeated by the Sinhalese ruler Duttugemunu, who re-established the Sinhalese lineage. The Buddhist chroniclers emphasize that all these Tamil rulers governed the country righteously. That they continued state patronage of Buddhism is shown by epigraphic evidence. Elara in particular gained a legendary reputation in Sinhalese tradition for his sense of justice. It appears that the portrayal of the conflict between Elara and Duttugemunu as a racial war between Tamils and Sinhalese is a later interpretation. Reading the account carefully, one sees it more as a dynastic battle, purely political in its nature. Many Sinhalese generals fought on the side of Elara. If he had been purely a foreign usurper who forced his way onto the throne, he could not have held power so long nor put up such a hard fight when attacked by his Sinhalese adversary. There is other evidence for the existence of large Tamil colonies in the harbors and in the capital city in the early period. A Tamil householder's terrace has been discovered in Anuradhapura, with inscriptions labelling the seats of the members. The seat of honor is that of a ship captain, which shows that the colony must have been predominantly a commercial one.

In the first century B.C., power passed again into the hands of Tamil rulers for about 14 years (102-89). They are described as a group of seven Tamil chiefs, probably of Pandyan extraction, who landed at the port of Mantota with a large army. They advanced to the capital and defeated the reigning king, Vattagamani, who fled to the hill country. Five of the chiefs stayed behind to rule the kingdom and were later dislodged by Vattagamani, who returned from exile to the throne. It was again from the Pandyan dynasty that the next Tamil rulers of Ceylon were drawn four centuries later. As a result of a successful invasion in the fifth century A.D., six Tamil rulers ruled at Anuradhapura for about 26 years. Their rule is seen to have extended to the southernmost parts of the island. These rulers also patronized Buddhism, and there are records of donations they made to monasteries. They were overthrown by Dhatusena, another hero in Sinhalese tradition. It was at this time that the *Mahavamsa* was written. It was at this time also that an anti-Tamil feeling entered Sinhalese nationalism, probably the result of this quarter of a century of Pandyan power, and probably restricted to the clergy.

In the first millennium of Sinhalese colonization of Ceylon, Tamil influence was thus felt in successive waves. There were two types of immigrations: the peaceful settlers and the invaders. The invaders do not seem to have come as permanent colonists and not in large number. The settlers came to perform diverse functions. Sin-

halese kings used to marry into Tamil royal families. The royal brides and their retinues were absorbed into Sinhalese culture. Colonies of merchants did not plant themselves permanently at one place and therefore did not leave an impact on the country. Small groups of craftsmen settled in Sinhalese villages in a predominantly Sinhalese population and were assimilated. There is evidence that some Sinhalese castes originated in this manner. An ever-increasing number of mercenary soldiers were brought from south India by the Sinhalese kings. These people lived in their own cantonments with little or no contact with the Sinhalese. Here they continued practising their own ways of life, language, and religion. Yet, from the seventh century onward, they were a powerful force in the country, interfering in the dynastic struggles of the Sinhalese and helping to put in power kings favorable to their own interests. Their leaders were appointed to high offices in the state. The first temporary shift of the capital from Anuradhapura was caused by the desire of the ruling monarch to rid himself of Tamil political influence. From this time, accentuated by growing contact between the Sinhalese and the Tamil kingdoms of south India, Tamil influence on Sinhalese governmental organization was greater than ever. This was particularly so in the sphere of land tenure and taxation, where terms of south Indian origin now made their appearance and were increasingly in vogue thereafter. Titles of officers that are of Tamil origin were also in evidence. Some of these terms are still in existence.

Hindu temples belonging to this early period which are scattered in many parts of the country attest to the presence of Tamil settler communities. There are three Siva temples of great antiquity, and these enable us to make reasonable inferences regarding Tamil settlements in the early centuries of the Christian era. Thirukethisvaram at Mantota and Konesvaram at Trincomalee are mentioned in early Tamil literature as famous Saiva centers which attracted pilgrims from south India. Thirukovil, a few miles south of Batticaloa, seems also to be a temple of the early period. These three places may thus be taken to be the seats of the oldest Tamil colonies of people engaged in trade, agriculture, and fishing. The coastal areas of the Jaffna peninsula, too, seem to have been colonized, particularly the ports at which small boats could call. There is indication of a sixth-century movement from Jaffna along the coast to Batticaloa. By the tenth century, the first stage of Tamil settlements was complete. Research on the laws of the Ceylon Tamil peoples seems to indicate that most of the settlers of this early stage came from the Malabar coast. This is understandable, as trading and migrating movements were in evidence from very early times among the peoples of this coast. They seem to have handed down to succeed-

ing colonists some of the elements of their early social structure. The people of Malabar, from whom these early immigrants were drawn, broke away from the mainstream of the Tamil language by evolving a separate language for themselves (Malayalam) from the twelfth century onward. This left the Malabar settlers of Ceylon as a Tamil-speaking people with a social organization different from that of the other Tamil communities of a reduced Tamil Nad.

VI. Town life and Village life

A large amount of data concerning the social life of the ancient period is available in classical literature. The late Professor V. R. RAMACHANDRA DIKSHITAR in his introduction to his translation of the *Cilappatikaaram* thus summarises aspects of town life and village life. Pages 53 to 56 of *The Silappadikaram*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1939.

IF THE MANIMEKALAI can be characterized a philosophico-religious work, the *Silappadikāram* can be said to be a treatise on political and social life. Here we have a description of three capitals with their glowing culture and civilization. In the busy streets of the cities any number of people belonging to various nations were met, most of them having come on commercial and other business. The municipal administration was excellent. The roads and streets were kept in good condition and were lighted. Committing nuisance in public streets was punishable. The houses seem to have been well built and properly provided with ventilation. Seven-storied buildings were not uncommon in the ancient cities, thus pointing to a considerable development of engineering skill in ancient South India. Among the communities the Brahmans received much respect especially for their learning in the sacred lore and for their continuance of the fire-rites. They were often awarded rich presents both in cash and kind. They were left unmolested during times of war, as was the case during Senguttuvan's battle on the banks of the Ganges. Next came the merchant community, and being the wealthiest community its members were honoured with titles by the reigning chieftains of the land.

Life in towns was one of luxury and ease. Some of the amusements of the people were dumb-shows and dancing accompanied by music, both vocal and instrumental. Women freely participated in such amenities of life. They attended temples and took part in the public dances. They decked themselves with costly attire and orna-

ments and made themselves attractive. Their clothes were of cotton, wool, silk, and even rat's hair.[1] One mode of their decoration was the painting of their bodies with scented pastes and powders and the wearing of garlands of flowers....

If the town life was rich, the village life was equally so. The villagers, of whom the agriculturists, cowherds and shepherds formed the majority, led a simple life attending to their hereditary professions of cultivation and cattle-tending. The villages were not altogether cut off from the activities of town life. There were means of transport which were, primarily, bullock-carts on land and boats on water. Between the villages, or more properly between two great towns, thick forests abounded with wild animals and serpents, streams and springs of water, fruit trees and trees of other kinds, cornfields and flower gardens. Iḷango-Aḍigaḷ gives us a vivid picture of all this when describing the route from ancient Puhār to Madura.[2]

The monotonous life of the villager was often enlivened by rural amusements of a varied character. Every village had a common dancing-hall (*kaḷam*).[3] Even the village women took part in these public performances like the *tuṇangai*, a kind of dance.[4] Having enough to eat and drink, the villagers led a contented and happy life. Notwithstanding the security and peace afforded by the kings of the land, theft was not uncommon. The Maṛavar who lived in forests and desert tracts, otherwise known as the Eiynar, who were often employed as soldiers in wars by the Tamil kings, had for their chief profession highway robbery.[5] They often deprived the unwary wayfarer of his belongings: cattle lifting was one feature of their thieving. They were addicted to liquor and ate from a common table. They hunted the wild hog, boar and deer, whose flesh they ate, using their skins as clothes and their ivory teeth and nails as ornaments.

VII. Rural Government

The village formed a strong nucleus of social and administrative life in the ancient period, and continued to do so into the modern period. From literature we obtain a few glimpses of the life of rural communities. T. V. MAHALINGAM, Professor of Archaeology, Univer-

[1] Canto xiv, ll. 205-7, comm.

[2] Cantos x-xi.

[3] *Maṇi.*, canto iv, l. 6.

[4] Canto v, l. 70.

[5] See also Dikshitar's paper 'The Eiynar' in *Sentamil*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1.

sity of Madras, writes of ancient rural administration in his book *South Indian Polity*, University of Madras, 1955. The reading is taken from pages 336 to 337.

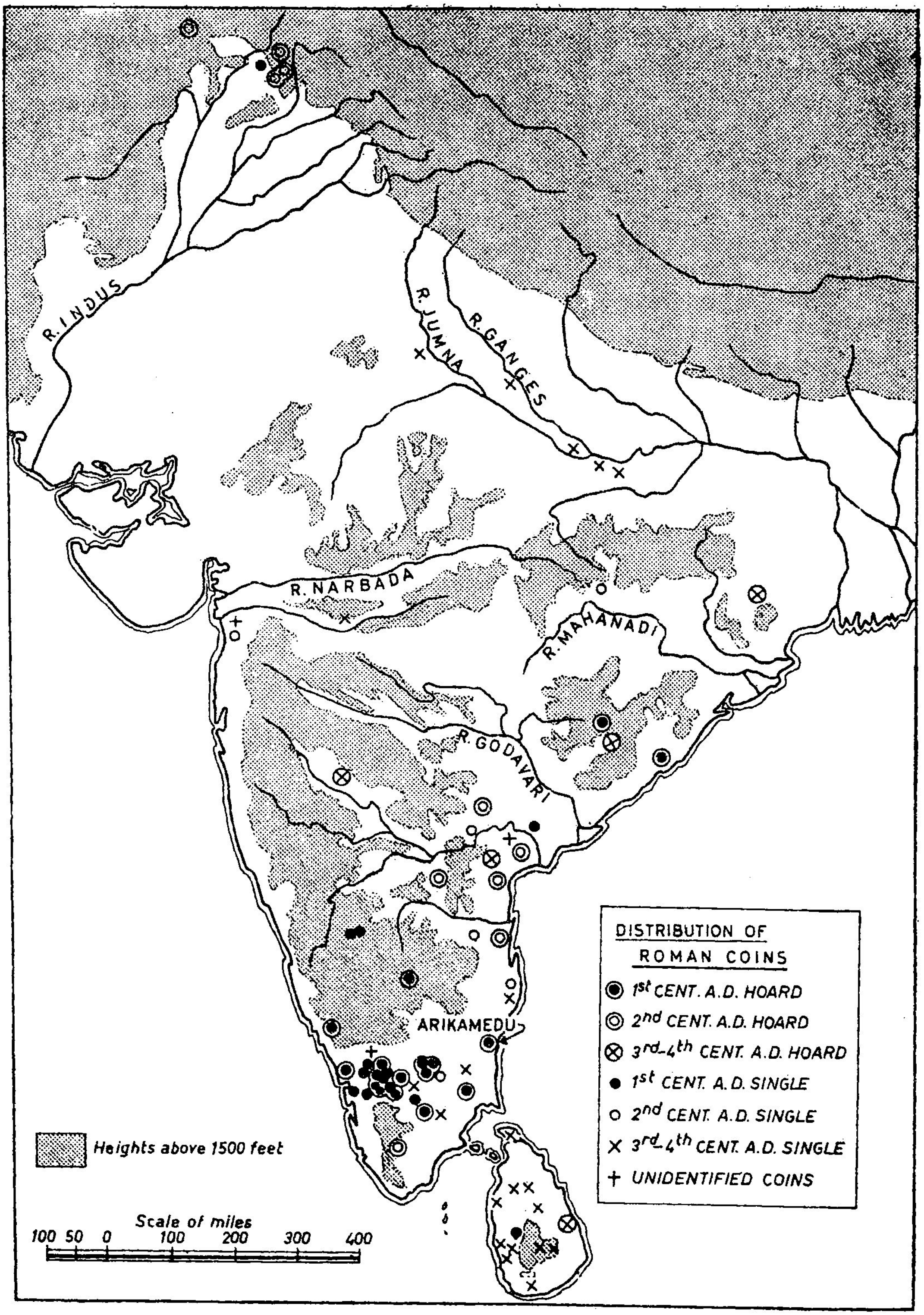
For a study of the beginnings of rural administration in the Tamil country we depend largely on the classical literature of the Sangam age, wherein we get frequent reference to two terms, the *Manram* and the *Podiyil*. The word *Manram* has been explained by the commentator Naccinārkkiniar as the open place in the centre of the village where all people meet under the shade of a tree (*ūrukku naḍuvāyellā-ru-mirukkum marattaḍi*). It was the common public place also called *Podiyil, Podiyam* or *Poduvil* usually with the tree of the region or the banyan in the centre. It was a place which was used by the shepherds, as a result of which they were probably called *Manrāḍis*. It was a place where the social festivities of the village were conducted with mirth and enthusiasm. Sacrifices to the gods were made at that place. The *Manram* was so important that it was considered that its capture and ploughing with asses was symbolic of the conquest of the village.[1] It served as a public place for more serious actions also. The Kośar, for instance, are said to have met in the *Podiyil* under the banyan tree for the discussion of common affairs. The kings used to go to the *Manram* for the transaction of public business, such as administration of justice. The Coḷa king Kiḷḷivaḷavan had ordered the sons of his enemy Malayamān to be thrown to the elephant. When the order was about to be executed, Kovil Kiḷār, the poet interceded on their behalf and appealed to the king for mercy pleading that a strange fear had overtaken them and they were standing at the *Manru* in bewilderment.[2] This shows that it was a place where public punishments were inflicted. Poet Pottiyar, a good friend of another Coḷa king regrets very much for the death of the king by starvation as a result of which the *Manram* at Uraiyūr had become bereft of the king.[3] Apart from such stray references to the *Manram* and the *Podiyil* one does not get any further information about them. Even the *Kuraḷ* does not contain any clear reference to the village and its institutions. The *sabhā* (*avai*) mentioned in the work seems to have only some vague meaning though the commentator Parimelalagar would see in it reference to the king's *sabhā*. Anyway the *Manram* appears to have been a public place of great social activity in every village. "As the modern distinctions between the political and other aspects of social life found no expression in the organisation of a more primitive age, it

[1] *Puram*, 276.
[2] *Puram*, 46.
[3] *Ibid.*, 220.

seems legitimate to infer that matters that we are apt to consider politico-economic like the settlement of a civil dispute, the punishment of crime, or the purchase and sale of land, must have also engaged the attention of such popular gatherings in each locality."[4]

Our knowledge of the machinery of rural administration and self-governing institutions becomes clear when we pass on to the next period in the history of South India.

[4] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Studies in Cola History and Administration*, p. 76.


R. INDUS
R. JUMNA
R. GANGES
R. NARBADA
R. MAHANADI
R. GODAVARI
ARIKAMEDU
DISTRIBUTION OF ROMAN COINS
1st CENT. A.D. HOARD
2nd CENT. A.D. HOARD
3rd–4th CENT. A.D. HOARD
1st CENT. A.D. SINGLE
2nd CENT. A.D. SINGLE
3rd–4th CENT. A.D. SINGLE
UNIDENTIFIED COINS
Heights above 1500 feet
Scale of miles
100 50 0 100 200 300 400

Chapter Six

TRADE

The South of India because of its geographical location was very favoured with regard to trade with East and West, when navigation depended on winds and sails. Articles of merchandise from South East Asia and China were exchanged in the Tamil harbours, for the goods from Arabia and the Roman Empire. Besides, the Tamil kingdoms produced luxury articles of food (e.g. spices), clothing and ornaments, which were greatly sought after by many countries. The story of ancient Tamil trade throws light on the external relations of the Tamil kingdoms, the state of their cities, and their relationship with foreigners.

I. Trade with East and West

Roman writers furnish substantial evidence concerning the trade of the Tamil country. E. H. Warmington in *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* has collected the available literary evidence in his book which is now very rare. Cambridge University Press, 1928, x, 417. The following reading comprises pages 57 to 64.

The coast as far as Damirice (the west coast of the Tamils) was much infested by pirates as it was even in much later times, though it is possible that not pirates but the strong dynasty of the Andhra-bhritya, which ruled over parts of the Deccan and the district and coast of Konkan, are represented by Ptolemy's *andres peiratai,* and legend makes St. Thomas land in India at a royal city Andrapolis. Leuce Island (Nitrias in Pliny, Nitra in Ptolemy) was apparently Pigeon Island—much infested by pirates, according to Pliny—and robbers must have been active at the first two marts of Damirice,

namely Naura (Cannanore?) and Tyndis (Ponnani?), for about these the *Periplus* has little to say: yet Tyndis lay on the navigable river Ponnani which would bring down the pepper of the Anaimalai hills and the beryls of Coimbatore. As far as we can tell, the pirates of South Konkan and Canara were Tamils of the Satiya Kingdom, not much frequented by the Greeks for commerce.[1]

But with the three chief Tamil States of South India—namely the Kerala or Chera, the Pandya, and the Chola Kingdoms, the Romans were conducting a very active commerce. The Chera Kingdom was the one within easiest reach of western merchants and afforded them as a staple article pepper in unlimited quantities; in the *Periplus* the country is called Cerobothra, that is Cheraputra or Keralaputra, at one time extending from Cape Comorin to Karwar Point, but now the northern end was lost and the southern part (South Travancore) had passed into the hands of the Pandya rulers so that Kerala corresponded closely with the districts of Malabar, Cochin, and the north part of Travancore. Its most northern market-town was Tyndis, but its chief mart was the most well-known of all the coast-towns of India, namely Muchiri, residence of the ruler of Kodungalur or Kranganur, called by the Greeks Muziris and represented to-day not by Mangalore but by Cranganore on the river Periyar. The place was crowded with Greek and Arabian vessels; the Greeks brought imperial products in large ships and exchanged them for Indian, but much money had to be brought as well to make up the balance and to create a basis for exchange in India. Men paying a first visit traded silently with the Chera folk, as Pliny shews, but already, according to the Peutinger Table, a temple had been built at Muziris in honour of Augustus, though I feel doubtful about the two Roman cohorts alleged to have been stationed there. A Tamil poem speaks of the thriving Muchiri whither the fine large ships of the Yavana (Greeks) come bearing gold, making the water white with foam, and return laden with pepper, the Chera king giving rare products of the sea and mountains. As Lucian shews, the importance of the place lasted during the second century. Fifty miles to the south by sea and river lay another very important mart called Nelcynda represented not by Nileswara, as some have thought, but by the modern Kottayam in the backwaters behind Cochin. It was approached by stretches of water full of shoals and blocked channels, and vessels paying a visit unloaded and reloaded their vessels about twelve miles away at Bacare or Barcare, the modern Porakad. At this time Nelcynda belonged to the Pandya Kingdom which would be jealous of the control exercised by Cheras over the pepper trade and of

[1] *Periplus,* 53-54.

their possession of Porakad where ended a route through the pass of Achenkoil and forming the chief highway for goods brought across South India to the west coast, and we may conclude from Pliny that Greeks visiting only Nelcynda for pepper were told by the Pandyas that Muziris was not rich in merchandise. In Cochin too, or Malabar, a colony of Jews seems to have settled during the first century; they, possibly, sent out the Jewish families which migrated later to the districts between Lü Shan and Tcheng-tu in China. Kottayam has one of the oldest Syrian Christian churches in India. When the *Periplus* was written, Greek merchants were not visiting Carura, the residence of Chera kings, also called Vanji and to-day represented by Parur or Paravur, but leaving Egypt about July were content to deal simply with Muziris and Nelcynda, the trade of both places being of the same class.[2]

The Pandya Kingdom occupied generally the districts of Tinnevelly and Madura with part of Travancore, but in the time of the *Periplus* it extended beyond the Ghats so as to include more of Travancore. Just as the Chera Kingdom was famous for its pepper, so the Pandya Kingdom was famous for its pearls, obtained chiefly in the Gulf of Manaar from fisheries sheltered from the dangerous cyclones of the Bay of Bengal and worked by condemned criminals from Colchol (Korkai, now Kolkai at the mouth of the sacred river Tamraparni). They were subject to control from the inland capital Modura, which was not yet visited frequently by the Greek merchants. It is probable that the author of the *Periplus* did not go farther south than Nelcynda or perhaps the Red Bluffs, for his information becomes more scanty, even very inaccurate and his statements are founded on hearsay reports of other merchants. He mentions besides the Pyrrhos mountain (the Red Bluffs), Balita, Cape Comorin the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula (Comari), and Colchoi, but we miss the personal note which is a characteristic of the former parts of his narrative; yet it cannot have been long before Roman subjects resided in the Pandya Kingdom just as they did in the Chera region. Powerful Yavana and dumb Mlecchas (that is, barbarians) in complete armour formed bodyguards to Tamil rulers, and it has been definitely stated, on the authority of Tamil poems once more, that "Roman" soldiers enlisted in the service of Pandya and other kings; for instance, in the reign of Pandya Aryappadai-Kadantha-Nedunj-Cheliyan the gates of the fort Madura (a great city with streets appropriated to special trades) were guarded by Roman soldiers with drawn swords; another poem, in which is described a Tamil king's tent on the battle-field, speaks of it as guarded by powerful and

[2] *Periplus*, 56-57.

stern-looking Yavana, while dumb Mlecchas, in complete armour and using gestures, watched in the antechamber all night. Likewise the poet Nakkirar exhorts a Pandya prince to drink in peace the cool and fragrant wine brought by the Yavana in their good ships (or bottles = skins?). From the very beginning of the Roman Empire the Pandya people had probably taken the leading part in encouraging the Romans to come and trade, for they had sent, as we have seen, an embassy to Augustus.

Prosperous as the Chera and Pandya Kingdoms were at this time, the largest, richest, and most flourishing Tamil State was the Chola Kingdom, of which the coast is called Aegialos by the *Periplus*, stretching roughly from the Pennar river and Nellore to Pudukottai and the Valiyar or the Varshalai, or perhaps even the Vaigai river on the south. Its capital Argaru (Uraiyur, destroyed in the seventh century), now part of Trichinopoly, was famed for its muslins and perhaps for its own pearl-fisheries in the Palk Strait, but its greatest emporium was Kaviripaddinam or Pukar, Puhar (the Camara of the *Periplus*, on the river Chabari or Chaberis of Ptolemy), a busy place on the east coast at the mouth of the northern branch of the Kaveri or Cauvery river. We learn a great deal about it from Tamil literature, and since town and harbour are now buried beneath the sand near Tranquebar, the accounts which we have are all the more interesting. The river could take heavily laden ships without forcing them to slacken sail, and these ships brought wares of all kinds to the platforms and warehouses of the town; merchants and artizans had their own streets, and the place was particularly favoured by Greeks who soon resided near the warehouses and exposed attractive wares for sale; the magnificent palace of the Chola king had been built partly with the help of Greek carpenters, who appear to have been a class of worker in particular demand in India at this time. Thus long before the Empire began Eudoxos had taken artizans with him when he set out for India; again, according to the later tradition accepted in the fourth century, St. Thomas was induced to go to India because he met an Indian merchant who had been sent by Gudnaphar (reigning in A.D. 45) to fetch him a skilful carpenter; it is true that older tradition makes St. Thomas the evangelist not of India, but of Parthia, and does not make him suffer martyrdom at all. But since Gudnaphar (or Gundaphar) of the *Acta Thomae* is the Gondophernes of Indo-Parthian coins, both legends (?) come from the same origin, and reflect travel to North-west India. Lastly, an inscription of Rhodes tells us of one Amphilochos whose renown in his art reached furthest Indus. If this is not mere boasting, and if India is not Ethiopia, he may have been an architect who visited India.

Along the coasts of the Chola Kingdom lighthouses were placed for the use of merchants, and one wonders whether the idea was taken from the Greeks resident in the kingdom, or from the famous lighthouse at Alexandria when the Pandyan embassy visited the Roman Empire in the time of Augustus. Of the three important Chola marts given by the *Periplus*—Camara, which we have described, Poduce (Pondicherry or else Pulicat), and Sopatma—the last-named, called Sopaddinam (Madras?) in Tamil poems, was furnished with one of these lighthouses. All three marts traded with the regions of the Ganges and the Malay Peninsula, with the coast of Malabar, and with Ceylon, in large ships of their own, and a Tamil poem shews that the far-famed Saliyur (Selur, Salur, Delur in Ptolemy), opposite the north end of Ceylon, was a similar mart, ever crowded with ships which had crossed the dangerous ocean and from which costly wares were landed. The *Periplus* shews that the Greeks imported into the kingdom more merchandise of ther own than they did elsewhere, but the author had not been beyond Cape Comorin himself, and so is content to give a general statement.

Of Ceylon the author knew little except that pearls, precious stones, muslins, and tortoise-shell came from there; he gives its name Palaesimundu, and says that the northern part was a day's distance from the coast of India, but enumerates no ports or marts, and exaggerates the size of the island tenfold, and makes it almost touch the Azanian district of the east coast of Africa, but he is not so ill-informed as Pomponius Mela, who not only exaggerates the size of Ceylon in a similar manner, but is also uncertain whether it was an island or the eastern end of the supposed great southern Continent. As I shall shew, Greek merchants were generally content to find the products of Ceylon in the marts of the west coast of India, without visiting the island itself. Few coins have been found there for certain dating before Nero, and even after him only about a dozen dating before the end of the second century.

Of the eastern coast of India beyond the limits of the Chola Kingdom the *Periplus* has only a short summary without records of ports and cities, but it draws attention to the region of Masalia (Masulipatam), famed for its muslins (and probably as the trade-centre of Andhra kings), and of Dosarene (Orissa), famed for its ivory. From the Chola Kingdom northwards Andhra kings controlled the coast and the marts, and Roman trade did not flourish yet so far east, though we need not doubt that the wealth and literary activity of at least the nearer Tamil States at this time were due to their traffic with the Roman Empire, as well as the Arabians, Burma, Malay, and regions beyond. In regions included in the ancient Chera, Pandya, and Chola Kingdoms have been found large numbers of Roman

coins struck chiefly by emperors down to Nero, and after the death of that emperor the traffic on Rome's part was not confined so closely to the Tamils, but was spread more evenly along Indian coasts in general, and was conducted more by barter than with money, resulting in a decrease in the numbers of coins found in southern districts representing emperors subsequent to Nero.

The last notices of importance given by the *Periplus* are concerned with the regions of the Ganges and beyond; the author applies this name to the districts of Bengal, to the river itself (particularly the Hughli estuary) and to a mart which is probably the modern Tamluk; and in these regions there was a considerable trade in Chinese and Himalayan cinnamon-leaf, Chinese silk, and articles of local produce; the Malay Peninsula, regarded as an island, was known to send the finest of all tortoise-shell in the Indian seas, while to the north lay the land of This, that is, the great unexplored states of China, of which a great city was Thinae, that is, so far as we can tell, Nanking; the country produced silk sent to the west partly by land, partly through India and the Indian Ocean, and cinnamon-leaf; but few Chinese merchants ever came from there; instead the Besatae once a year brought cinnamon-leaf and sold it by silent barter at a spot (near Gangtok?) situated on the confines of their own homes in the Himalayas and the regions ruled by the Chinese. We shall deal with this trade and its importance later on.

This thriving commercial activity in Indian seas as revealed by the *Periplus* was of course in existence to a certain extent before the discovery of the best way in which to use the winds of the Indian Ocean, but the account was written at a time when the effects of the discovery were beginning to manifest themselves to their fullest extent. Certain general considerations of the available evidence will illustrate the far-reaching effects of Hippalos' discovery on Rome's traffic with India.

II. Roman Coins and Roman Wine

The literary evidence for trade from Roman and Tamil sources finds surprising corroboration from Archaeology and Numismatics. Sir Mortimer Wheeler describes the hordes of Roman coins found in India, and the Roman pottery and other articles excavated at Arikamedu, near Pondicherry. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, *Rome beyond the Imperial Frontiers,* G. Bell and Sons, London, 1954, xii, p. 192. The following reading is from pages 138 to 153.

THE PERIPLUS INDICATES clearly enough that the traffic with India was basically of two kinds. There were goods which were produced by the sub-continent itself, and there were others which reached the Indian markets from further afield, particularly from central Asia and China. Trade of the former category may usefully be termed 'terminal trade'; that of the latter was 'transit trade'. Although at certain ports, such as Barygaza, the two groups of commodities would converge, they were essentially separate and may be separately considered.

The trade of central and southern India was mainly terminal trade. The spices, muslins, pearls and jewel-stones which constituted the bulk of it came principally from those regions. On the showing of the *Periplus*, there may be added a modicum of transit trade, chiefly in the form of silk which, diverted by Parthian hostility from the more direct continental routes, sometimes found its way deviously from China via the east coast of India to the ports on the Malabar coast and so joined up with the direct monsoon route to the West. We are reminded that, centuries later, on this same cosmopolitan coast a colony of Chinese merchants and craftsmen established themselves and adequately prospered at Quilon. But in Roman times it may be suspected that the China trade normally found its way through more northerly ports in a manner to be discussed presently.

The importance of the South Indian trade with the West in the 1st century A.D. has long been underlined by the impressively abundant Roman coinage which has come to light fortuitously in the peninsula since 1775. Of 68 finds which (excluding those from Ceylon) are known from the whole sub-continent—India and Pakistan together—no fewer than 57 come from south of the Vindhyas; and, with the exception of a stray *denarius* of Tiberius at Taxila in the Punjab, *all* 1st-century Roman coins not associated with later issues have been found in the south. More precisely 29 finds, distributed through Madras province and the states of Hyderabad, Mysore, Cochin, Pudukottai and Travancore, comprise *aurei* or *denarii* ranging from Augustus to Trajan. This mass of coinage demands analysis.

The first noteworthy point is that, of the 29 1st-century finds, at least 20 are known to have constituted hoards, ranging individually from four or five coins to 'some hundreds, if not thousands'. In the circumstances it is reasonable to suspect that some of the ill-recorded strays likewise represent hoards.

Secondly, these 1st-century coins are invariably of gold or silver. There is no authenticated discovery of a Roman 'brass' coin of the 1st or 2nd century in India.

Thirdly, coins of Augustus and Tiberius predominate. After Nero they dwindle markedly.

Fourthly, the gold coins are liable to be either pierced for suspension or mutilated by a cut across the obverse. Only one of the very numerous Roman silver coins is known to have been similarly mutilated.

Fifthly, there is a notable grouping of early coin-finds across southern India from the western to the eastern coasts.

Of these five points, the first is readily explained in relation to the second. The significance of hoards in general has often been discussed, and they are commonly regarded as savings lost, or rather not recovered, during a period of disturbance. But it would be easy to overstress this aspect of the matter, and, whatever the accidents of their final deposition, it may be suggested that the preponderance of early Roman hoards in South India first and foremost represents an essentially economic factor. The great quantity of gold and silver coins imported by 1st-century Roman trade into India is noted or implied by more than one classical writer. The *Periplus* mentions it in relation to Barygaza and as first amongst the imports carried by Western merchants to the Malabar ports; Pliny (VI, 101) remarks that 'in no year does India absorb less than fifty million sesterces', which presumably represented actual cash rather than the estimated value of wares; Tiberius may be thought to have had this extravagant efflux specially in mind when he complained to the Roman senate of the reckless exportation of money 'to foreign nations and even to the enemies of Rome' in exchange for gew-gaws (Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 53). But how was all this currency fitted into the alien economies of recipients far beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire?

The clear answer is that, for the most part, it was employed not as currency but as bullion. In the whole of peninsular India there was no native currency of gold or silver to which the Roman coinage could be approximated. Pausanias (III, 12, 24) in the 2nd century observed that the Indians exchanged their wares with those of the Greeks without understanding the use of money. The potin or lead coinage struck by the Andhra empire of central India in the first two centuries A.D. is a partial exception to this rule; and half a dozen scattered *denarii* of Augustus and Tiberius found over a period of years in a restricted area of an Andhra town at Chandravalli, near Chitaldrug in northern Mysore, if they do not represent a hoard broken anciently, may here have circulated in some ratio to the native base metal issues. Outside the Andhra zone, however, this possibility does not arise. For the most part, the imported coins can only have been used as bullion, to be weighed out in exchange for

goods as silver ornaments or scraps may be weighed out in an Indian bazaar to-day. Their normal occurrence in 'hoards' is a natural corollary. Indeed, the term 'hoard' is in this context largely a misnomer; the so-called hoard being doubtless a unit of stamped silver or gold to a total weight agreed for some specific purchase, or at least the bulk reserve from which such units could be detached. Monetary circulation in the ordinary sense was not in question. The fact that the precious metal was already subdivided into known and stamped sub-units (coins) would nevertheless facilitate the trader's accounting and at the same time carry prestige with the customer. Pliny (VI, 85) tells a relevant story of the admiration expressed by the king of Ceylon for Roman honesty, on the ground that among the money found on a Roman castaway (Plocamus' famous freedman) the *denarii* were all equal in weight, although the various figures on them showed that they had been coined by several emperors.

This respect for Roman integrity was evidently shaken in India, as in Free Germany, by Nero's debasement of his silver coinage in A.D. 63. The third of our points above needs no additional explanation. Just as in Free Germany the older pre-Neronic issues in pure silver were sought in preference to the alloyed issues subsequent to the year 63, so in India silver issues later than Nero hardly occur, whilst several hoards end with his reign or that of his predecessor. And to this shaken confidence on the Indian side in the bullion value of the newer *denarii* may certainly be added export restrictions at source, arising from the expressed anxiety of the Roman treasury at the enormous outflow. That the India trade continued or even increased after the the time of Nero is clear from Ptolemy and from the recent archaeological evidence of Arikamedu, which will be considered below. But it continued mainly in manufactured goods and raw materials with only a modest reinforcement from Roman gold and (much later) base metal.

This brings us to our fourth point, the mutilation of the gold coinage. The facts are as follows. Apart from occasional coins pierced for use as ornaments or charms, in at least six of the hoards the gold coins have, wholly or mostly, been defaced by an incision across the imperial head; and, since no other feature of the design, even when representation of the human figure is involved, has been singled out for this treatment, the purpose of the defacement was definitely not iconoclasm, but the cancellation of the piece as a coin-issue. The defaced coins cover a wide range of time, including issues of Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Hadrian and, apparently in one case, Constantine I.

For this mutilation there is no need to question the explanation

long ago put forward by Sir George Hill that 'the incisions were made in India, in order to put the coins out of circulation'.[1] But an interesting fact may be added. Except in one *stūpa*-deposit, which as a votive offering may be regarded as a law unto itself, none of this Roman gold, whether mutilated or not, is found within the probable limits of the late 1st- and 2nd-century Kūshāṇa empire, which included the whole of north-western India and the west-coast trading-ports of the Indus delta, Gujarat and Bombay. *Within* that empire was at this time struck the only native gold coinage of the period in India, and it was struck significantly to the Roman standard. In other words, it was in unconcealed competition with the Roman coinage, and the suggestion has even been made that it consisted, at any rate in part, of re-struck Roman *aurei*. The implication is that all Roman gold which could be recovered was absorbed by the Kūshāṇa empire and thus regulated or reminted; and the all-powerful Kushāns saw to it that such Roman gold as was admitted to their border states was removed by mutilation from possible rivalry as currency, and relegated to use as bullion or ornament. The fact that most of this Roman gold is of 1st-century date, whereas the Kūshāṇa empire reached its prime in the 2nd century is readily explained by Roman export restrictions from the latter part of the 1st century onwards and the consequence that little more than gold surviving in trade from the previous period was now in use.

The fact that a minority of the Roman gold was not mutilated implies, on this showing, merely the unequal reach of Kūshāṇa interference or a measure of administrative laxity that requires no explanation in the East. In regard to imported silver, the question did not arise. As already remarked, no silver coinage comparable with the imported *denarii* existed in India in the 1st or 2nd century A.D.; even the Kushāns issued none, with a single exception of Kadphises II in the British Museum and four coins, also unique, probably of his predecessor Kujūla Kadphises from Taxila.[2] Thus, unless very doubtfully in the Andhra kingdom, there was little risk of the intrusion of the *denarius* as currency since the country, including the Kūshāṇa empire, was as a whole economically unprepared for it.

We may now turn to our fifth point, geographical distribution. Be it repeated that a large proportion of the Roman coins from India has been found in the peninsula, to the south of the Vindhyas and even to the south of the main Deccan plateau. Within this vast area, the district of Coimbatore and its borders, some 250 miles

[1] *Num Chron.*, 3rd Series, XVIII (1898), 320; modified, *ib.* XIX (1899), 82.
[2] Marshall, *Taxila* (Cambridge, 1951), 1, 68.

south-west of Madras, have produced more than the whole of the rest of the sub-continent put together. From the Coimbatore district alone there are at least 11 1st-century hoards, running in the aggregate to many hundreds of gold and silver coins. As in all such cases, the first step is to refer to the map.

The district of Coimbatore is approached by two major river-valleys, that of the Cauvery from the east coast and that of the Ponnani from the west. It lies at the point where the Eastern Ghats, swinging westwards, merge into the Western Ghats and conspire with them to leave a transverse gap, about 20 miles wide and only 1,000 ft. high, between east and west. To-day through this, the Ponnani or Pālghāt or Coimbatore gap, the railway from Madras and the Carnatic plain penetrates to Calicut and Cochin; and the traditional use of this route is indicated by the legend which lands St. Thomas on the Malabar coast near Cranganore and takes him thence overland to the Madras coast.[3] Along this same route crowd the coins now in question (Fig. 1). Along it at first, we cannot doubt,

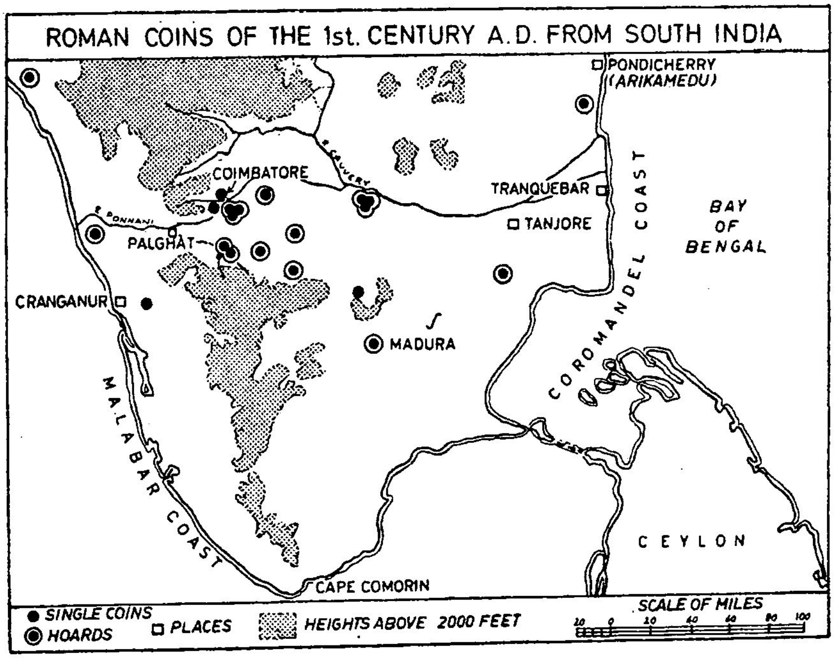


Fig. 1

came the ancient traffic from Muziris (Cranganore) and Nelcynda to *Podouke emporion* and *Khaberis emporion* (Arikamedu and Tran-

[3] Warmington, p. 83.

quebar) on the opposite coasts, evading the dangerous voyage round Cape Comorin. The avoidance of circumpeninsular navigation was a habit of ancient travelling. The little Cornish peninsula and the Jutland peninsula were thus short-circuited at one time or another. So too was peninsular India. Strabo in the time of Augustus wrote (15. 1. 4) that in his day only stray individuals had sailed round India to the Ganges and that they were 'of no use as regards the history of the places they had seen'. Pliny, as already related, had no recent knowledge of Ceylon until the embassy from the king of the island came to Rome with scrappy information in the time of Claudius. The *Periplus* becomes noticeably vague when, south-bound, it leaves Nelcynda on the Malabar coast. Indeed Ptolemy, in the middle of the 2nd century A.D., is our first circumstantial authority for those parts, and it has been observed that, in writing of Ceylon, he appears to have been making a display of information that was largely new to his reader. It is a fair inference that the Roman agencies established in the east coast ports under Augustus and Tiberius were, so far as the Westerners were concerned, the termini of trans-peninsular routes, and that only towards the end of the 1st century were the western and eastern ports linked also by regular circumpeninsular traffic. Consistently with this, no coins earlier than Nero and Vespasian are recorded from Ceylon.

If there are, then, clear geographical reasons for the short-circuiting of wealth and traffic through Coimbatore, it is fair to ask why did so appreciable a proportion of it come to rest there? The question cannot at present be answered. According to an unconfirmed but plausible Tamil tradition, the three ancient kingdoms of South India—Chola, Chera and Pandya— met in the Coimbatore district, and such a convergence of frontiers, providing alternative escapes, is at all times a favourite focus of brigandage. The hiding and loss of some part of this bullion would fit easily enough into that picture. Other hoards may represent the forgotten treasury of local prospectors and miners concerned with the famous beryl mines of the district, or of the owners of the pepper estates which doubtless spread, as to-day, on and below the 3,000-ft. contour in the fringes of the district. There is reason to suppose that search would reveal ample evidence of occupation hereabouts and excavation is now the necessary preliminary to further knowledge. Only at the eastern end of the zone, on the Coromandel Coast, has serious digging so far been attempted, and here the results have been immediate and dramatic.

Two miles south of Pondicherry, the capital of French India, a former oulet of the Gingee river forms a lagoon locked to-day by

a sand-bar from the Bay of Bengal, from which it is further sheltered by dunes and coconut palms. A part of the eastern bank of the lagoon stands some 20 ft. above the water and from the scarp project the jagged ends of successive brick buildings to which the mound owes its being. To the villagers the site is known as Arikamedu; French archaeologists have preferred to name it from a neighbouring village, Virampatnam. The fragments of walling were noted as long ago as the 18th century, but it was in 1937 that the site first attracted archaeological attention.

In that year village children brought to a local French antiquary a number of relics which they had picked up on the surface, amongst them a gem (now lost) which is reported to have borne an intaglio portrait of Augustus. Subsequently French and Indian investigators carried out some useful if summary digging on the site, and amongst the resultant finds the present writer in 1944 detected sherds of Italian red-glazed 'Arretine' ware and of *amphorae* from the Mediterranean, together with a fragment of a Roman lamp and a second Graeco-Roman gem, an untrimmed crystal intaglio representing a cupid and a bird. The Arretine ware was of the early 1st century A.D. In 1945 a systematic excavation was carried out for three months by the Archaeological Survey of India under the writer's direction, and the work was resumed for the French Government by Mr. J. M. Casal in 1947-8.[4] The accumulated material of Western origin supplements with important detail the general historical and numismatic evidence given above, whilst, from the Indian standpoint, it has for the first time provided a firm and widely applicable datum for the associated native culture. The excavations have thus combined in a happy manner the interests alike of Western and of Indian archaeology.

Much of the town has been removed by the river, and its former landward extent is unknown, but the excavations of man and nature have identified a nucleus over 400 yards from north to south along the bank. Under the southern part of this area have been found the traces of a village associated with smooth black-and-brown pottery of the distinctive kind used by the builders of megalithic tombs in South India between *c.* 200 B.C. and A.D. 50. This village, like its modern equivalents in the neighbourhood, doubtless consisted of simple fisher-folk who caught the gullible fish of the region from the shore or from small outriggers, gathered the fruits and juices of the palms, cultivated rice-patches, and lived in a leisurely

[4] For the 1945 and earlier work, see *Ancient India*, No. 2 (Delhi, 1946), pp. 17ff.; for the 1947-48 work, see J. M. Casal, *Fouilles de Virampatnam-Arikamedu* (Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1949); also *Aspects of Archaeology (Essays to O. G. S. Crawford)* (London, 1951), pp. 354ff.; and *Germania* 152, p. 389.

and unenterprising fashion just above subsistence level. To it suddenly, from unthought-of lands 5,000 miles away, came strange wines, table-wares far beyond the local skill, lamps of a strange sort, glass, cut gems. Traders arrived across-country from the west coast to meet the large Indian east coast ships of which the *Periplus* tells us, laden with gemstones from Ceylon, pearls from Kolchoi (Colchi), or spices and silks from the Ganges. A small foreign quarter like that of Puhar came into being, and finally the village was replaced by a brick-built town, spreading northwards to the sea. There is no reasonable doubt that this *new town* was the *Podouke* of the *Periplus*, the *Podouke emporion* of Ptolemy, the Pudu-chcheri or 'New Town' of the Tamils, garbled by Europeans as Puddicherry and Pondicherry. Shifting sands have moved the town a mile or two, but the name has come down, little changed, through nineteen centuries.

Of the buildings of this New Town something is now known, although brick-robbers have upturned much of the site. At the northern or seaward end, beside the river and at water-level, was a large, simple brick structure upwards of 150 ft. long, pretty obviously a warehouse. Further south were courtyards walled with brick and timber, containing stoutly constructed brick tanks and cisterns, drains, wells and soak-pits, the last made in a characteristically Indian fashion of superimposed terracotta rings. South again, a formidable brick revetment, sloped or battered and surviving to a height of 6 ft., was traced by Mr. Casal for a distance of 80 yards eastwards from its broken end on the river bank and was interpreted as the side of a tank or reservoir, but may rather have been a defensive revetment. And still further south scraps of walling have come to light in the much-disturbed ground. The overall impression is that of storage-accommodation towards the mouth of the former estuary, backed by industrial quarters where, it may be supposed, the 'Agaritic' muslins which the *Periplus* mentions as an export of the region were made and dyed, and where beads and other objects of semi-precious stones, which litter the area, were assembled or worked. The administrative centre, temples and dwellings of the town have not yet been identified.

Most of the brick buildings explored were constructed after the red-glazed Arretine ware had ceased to arrive from Italy, where its manufacture, in the forms and fabric now in question, came to an end about A.D. 45. On the other hand the importation of wine-*amphorae* seems to have preceded that of the Arretine and certainly continued after the Arretine had ceased. The main development of the port may in fact be ascribed approximately to the middle of the 1st century A.D., although its international usage must have begun

nearly half a century earlier, if the depth of the deposit (9 ft.) containing *amphora* sherds under the warehouse be taken as an index.[5] Moreover, some of the Arretine ware dates probably from the first quarter of the 1st century A.D. For the subsequent duration of the town we have at present insufficient evidence. In the industrial area where the tanks or dye-vats are situated there were two or more phases of reconstruction, but there was a general continuity in the main units of the plan, and sherds of Mediterranean *amphora* occurred in all strata. In other words, the function and contacts of the site remained unchanged. To interpret these factors in terms of time is guesswork; a minimum of a century might appear to have been required by the renewals, but there seems to be no compelling reason to allow more than two centuries, and a terminal date soon after A.D. 200 is suggested.

The quantity of Western pottery in the relatively small areas uncovered is impressive. At least fifty sherds of Arretine, including four potters' stamps (VIBIE, ITTA, CAMVRI, C.VIBI OF) are recorded, and others have been found, mostly in the northern (warehouse) sector where, it may be supposed, the shippers and merchants were congregated. Of *amphora* sherds something like 150 are known to have been unearthed over a wider area; and incidentally an internal incrustation on some of the sherds has been shown by analysis to contain resin, a traditional component of certain Greek wines though here (as elsewhere) perhaps applied deliberately by the potters to render the vessels impermeable. Other wares which may have been imported from the West include above all an extensive group of flat-bottomed dishes of a hard, metallic pottery, whitish in section but with a polished slip blackened internally by inverted firing and with concentric rings of rouletting on the upper surface of the base. Local imitations of this ware are distinguished by softer fabric and coarser rouletting. This 'rouletted dish' is widely distributed in southern and central India and has become what geologists would call a 'type fossil' in the dating of associated Indian cultures. It will be considered again at a later stage.

Roman glass, including a 'pillared' bowl of 1st-century type, reached the site in small quantities, and fragments of at least two characteristic Roman lamps of early date have been noted. On the other hand, coins of the period, whether Roman or Indian, are completely absent. This is in accordance with the postulate, already discussed, that the imported currency was not as a rule circulated in India in the normal processes of monetary exchange, the country

[5] This deposit was largely alluvial mud and probably accumulated fairly rapidly.

being economically unprepared for it.

The discovery of Arikamedu is in more than one respect a landmark in the study of Indo-Roman relations. For the first time it gives a habitation and a name to one of the *emporia* with which the literature and the coinage had in a more general way familiarized us. The quantity of the Mediterranean material produced by comparatively trifling excavation is a suggestive index of the extent of the international trade which used the place. This fact, with the early date of some of the material and the suddenness with which it is superimposed upon a purely native and local culture, has substantiated the essentially Augustan organization of regulated monsoon traffic; whilst the remoteness of the site, on the further side of India, emphasizes the range of this new organization, the powerful purpose with which it was reaching out eastwards to the sources of pearls and silk. The imagination of the modern enquirer kindles as he lifts from the alluvium of the Bay of Bengal sherds bearing the names of craftsmen whose kilns lay on the outskirts of Arezzo. From the woods of Hertfordshire to the palm-groves of the Coromandel, these red-glazed cups and dishes symbolize the routine adventures of tradesmen whose story may be set only a little below that of king Alexander himself.

Other sites in central and southern India have produced occasional evidence of direct or indirect contact with Roman things, but cannot at present be classed with Arikamedu. Reference has been made to the rouletted dishes which were first identified and dated there, and to their distinctively Mediterranean character even when they may in fact be local copies. This type, wholly foreign to Indian ceramic tradition, nevertheless 'caught on' in India and has become an invaluable index of date on many sites where other time-evidence is lacking or inadequate. Far from the coast in northern Mysore, on the great central plateau, it has been found with, and has helped to date, an Andhra town of the 1st and 2nd century A.D. at Brahmagiri in the Chitaldrug district; and 45 miles away in the same district it has appeared at Chandravalli where, appropriately, *denarii* of Augustus and Tiberius have likewise been found. The Andhra towns of Maski and Kondapur, also on the Deccan plateau, have produced similar sherds; whilst nearer the east coast at yet another Andhra city, Amaravati, more rouletted pottery has been gathered on the surface, and the same site is said long ago to have yielded Roman coins not otherwise specified. Here, beside the famous *stūpa* which provided the sculptures long exhibited on the main staircase of the British Museum, is a town site which from more than one standpoint would amply repay excavation. And away to the north-east, some 700 miles from Arikamedu, near the sacred temple-city

of Bhubaneswar, the excavators of an ancient walled town known as Sisupalgarh have found sherds of the same ware. These widespread occurrences represent altogether but a brief period of fieldwork, and there is no doubt that our new 'type fossil' of the 1st century A.D. will acquire an increasing importance as time goes by.

Apart from the rouletted ware, red-glazed pottery of non-Indian, Mediterranean type has recently been found at Nasik, near Bombay. More manifestly Western in origin are a bronze statuette of Neptune or Poseidon and a Roman bronze jug of the middle of the 1st century A.D. from another site not far from the west coast. They were found together in a brick building of Andhra date in an ancient town-mound at Kolhapur in the southern part of Bombay province, and are striking evidences of the trade which, as our historical authorities indicate, used a number of harbours on the Konkan coast, south of Bombay. When last seen by the writer in 1948 the jug and statuette were housed in a little museum at Kolhapur. The statuette is of better quality than the average commercial product and, perhaps with the Harpocrates from Taxila, is the most noteworthy work of its kind from the East.

A little further north, at Akota in Baroda State, the bronze handle of a similar jug bearing a figure of Cupid has been discovered recently during the excavation, by the Baroda University, of the ancient site of Ankottaka. It is closely comparable with the handle of the jug from Hoby at the other end of the Roman map. From Karvan in the same state a cameo of exuberant sub-classical workmanship has also been recovered, but details are at present lacking.

Also from central India, generally from the territory of the Andhra empire, come a number of imitations of Roman coins, made locally as ornaments and mostly pierced or looped for suspension. They are normally of terracotta and were doubtless originally gilded. The most remarkable series was unearthed at the Andhra town of Kondapur in Hyderabad State and is preserved in the Hyderabad (Deccan) museum. It consists of at least 20 recognizable imitations of *aurei* or *denarii* of Tiberius (d. A.D. 37), with an Indianized version of the head of the emperor on the obverse and of Livia as Pax on the reverse. Both sides bear garbled inscriptions. Two similar clay *bullae*, one of them again imitating a Tiberius (with Livia-Pax facing the wrong way, as befits a copy), were found at the Chandravalli site already mentioned. Another, also of clay, was dug up on the Kolhapur mound, and yet others bearing Romanized heads come from Ujjain and Sisupalgarh, and even from Rajghat on the outskirts of Benares, further north. A stone mould for casting a metal medallion of this class was found long ago at Besnagar, near Bhilsa in Gwalior State, and two gold medallions of sub-classical type and pierced for

suspension were recovered at Nagarjunikonda in the Guntur district from a Buddhist *stūpa* ascribed to the 2nd-3rd centuries A.D. Another pierced gold imitation of an issue of Antoninus Pius was found with a pierced genuine *aureus* of Commodus at Chakerbedha, Bilaspur District, C.P. This list is not complete but sufficiently indicates the astonishing vogue of Roman coin-types over a large part of central India in the 1st and 2nd centuries.

At the same time be it emphasized that, for all the vigour of its impact, the Roman trade implied by these odds and ends had no appreciable or durable effect upon the cultures of the peninsula. It left a superficial imprint here and there, sometimes in remarkably remote places, but nowhere south of the Vindhyas was that imprint more than a graffito upon an essentially self-sufficient native fabric. Only when we move northwards towards the foot-hills of the Himalaya do we find evidences of a more significant and lasting penetration of Western ideas, and to this difficult problem we must now turn.

III. *Malayadvipa: A Study in Early Indianization*

Sir Roland Braddell has in this article which was published in the *Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol. IX, 1956, given a comprehensive and readable account of available evidence. Though the reading is long, it is an important phase of the Tamil story.

The earliest epigraphical evidence of Indianization appears in southern Indo-China in the second century A.D. and in Malaysia *c.* A.D. 400. The former comes from the ancient site of Oc Eo and consists of a series of short Sanskrit inscriptions of a religious character inscribed on a number of the objects discovered.[1] They are written in a South Indian Brahmi script and date palaeographically from the second to the fifth centuries A.D. Brahmi "is the earliest form of Indian writing known to us, and from it have been derived, by slow evolution through ages, all the Indian characters current today, including Tamil, Telugu, and Kanarese."[2] The rest of the earliest Sanskrit inscriptions known in South-East Asia are in the script called Pallava which, though convenient as a description, is in fact a misnomer. It is a box-headed script which was first called Vengi, that being used as a general name for the delta region of the

[1] To avoid continual footnotes the reader is referred to the works set out in the bibliography at the end of this paper.
[2] Majumdar, *HCIP.*, vol. I, p. 53.

Krishna and Godavari rivers, the heart-land of the Telugu-speaking Andhras lying between Kalinga to the north and the Pallava country to the south. In 1918 Vogel laid great emphasis on the Pallava connection with South-East Asia and adopted for the script the name of *Pallava.*[3] The name has remained in use ever since, but it is known now that this script is not specifically Pallava but was prevalent on the Coromandel coast and in use by the Andhras amongst others.[4] In point of fact, the earliest Pallava inscriptions in India are in Prakrit on copperplates and dated palaeographically A.D. 250-350, after which copperplates in Sanskrit come from A.D. 359-600, and then stone and copperplate from the seventh century A.D.[5] From 1888 it was customary to regard the inscription of Vo-canh, in the Nha-trang region of southern Annam, as the oldest of the Sanskrit ones in the Pallava script and to assign it palaeographically to the third century A.D. For long it was regarded as a Champa inscription. Then Professor Coedès argued that it was in reality a Fu-nan one, and identified the Sri Mara of the inscription with Fan Shih-man, king of Fu-nan in the third century A.D. This became accepted until Dr. D. C. Sircar, disputed it, and now the whole theory has been criticized so destructively and logically by Professor Emile Gaspardone[6] that it will be wiser to place the Vo-canh inscription alongside the ones in Pallava script which in *c.* A.D. 400 begins to appear in Malaya, Borneo and Java.

Like the earliest epigraphical evidence, the first positive evidence of Indianization in South-East Asia comes from the ancient site at Oc Eo, which was discovered and explored by the French archaeologist Louis Malleret. This site lies at the foot of the small massif of Bathé, between Long Xuyen and Rash Gia. It was connected by canals with the Bassak River and with another ancient site at Ta Kèo, some eleven kilometres from the shore of Rash Gia Bay. Ta Kèo, was connected by canal with the shore of the Bay and appears to have been the port for Oc Eo, which the finds prove to have been an industrial and commercial centre in maritime relations with Siam, Malaya, India, Indonesia, Iran, and certainly the Mediterranean, either directly or through the intermediary of India. The preponderant part, however, was played by South India, and probably the Coromandel coast. The evidence shows that South Indians were settled

[3] J.P. Vogel, "The Yupa Inscriptions of King Mulavarman from Koetei (East Borneo)", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie* (Batavia, 1918), Diel 74, pp. 167-232.

[4] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of Sri Vijaya* (Madras, 1949), pp. 17, 27.

[5] R. Sathianathaier, *HCIP.*, vol. 3, p. 257.

[6] E. Gaspardone, "La plus ancienne inscription d'Indochine", *Journal Asiatique* (Paris, 1953), pp. 477-85.

at Oc Eo amongst an indigenous people of 'Indonesian' type portrayed on several of the objects found. The presence of Vaishnavism, Saivism, and Buddhism is attested, and the great preponderance of imports were Indian. Two Buddhist bronzes in the style of Gandhara, A.D. 100-300, were found as well as a Buddhist copper statuette in the style of Amaravati; of the second or third centuries A.D. A cameo has figures upon it like those of Indians from north-western India and there is evidence of Indo-Scythian affinities. The finds of Iranian origin included a glass disc with the bust of a man wearing a Scythian head-dress, a beard and plaited locks of hair, who is smelling a flower and is reminiscent of effigies on Sassanian coins. Perhaps the most surprising evidence is that of Roman imports, which could, of course, have arrived through Indian middlemen, though the possibility of Romano-Greek ships having sailed direct to the port of Oc Eo cannot be excluded. There are intaglios engraved with Mediterranean subjects, notably composite figures of Roman or Greek origin, and two Roman medallions of Antonine emperors. One of these bears a mutilated legend in which the name of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180) can be distinguished, and the other gives the name of Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-161) and a date which corresponds to A.D. 152. The possibility that Oc Eo was the *Zabai* of Ptolemy seems to be a rational conjecture.

Oc Eo had highly developed industries in metals, beads, glyptics and jewellery. The gold work is so noticeable that Malleret attributes a gold cult to the place. Tin, iron, copper and lead were also used. None of these metals could have come from the Trans-Bassak-region and must have been imported from elsewhere. One very possible site for the tin and the gold would have been the east coast of Malaya, where there exists a chain of ancient mining sites stretching from Pahang to Patani and, from the archaeological evidence, contemporaneous with Oc Eo.[7] Some of the objects found at Oc Eo portray an animal with a jet of saliva issuing from its mouth and associated with the symbols of the sun and the moon. It is reminiscent of the gold 'kijang' (barking deer) coins minted in Kelantan, Trengganu and Patani by various Muslim Sultans,[8] and of the bull vomit mentioned in the Sejarah Malayu; but in our present state of knowledge it would be unwise to draw any inferences.

There is no doubt that Oc Eo was the commercial centre of the

[7] Anker Rentse, "A Historical Note on the Northeastern Malay States", *JMBRAS*., vol. 20, pt. 1, (1947), pp. 23-40; W. Linehan, "Traces of a Bronze Age Culture associated with Iron Age Implements in the Region of Klang and the Tembeling, Malaya", *JMBRAS*., vol. 24, pt. 3 (1951), pp. 1-59.

[8] Anker Rentse, "Gold Coins of the North-Eastern Malay States", *JMBRAS*. vol. 17, pt. 1 (1939), pp. 88-97.

ancient kingdom known to us only by its Chinese name of Fu-nan, a transcription of the old Khmer word for 'mountain'. Fu-nan was centred on the lower course and in the delta of the Mekhong River, and the great Khmer empire grew out of it. The earliest accounts of it were written by two Chinese envoys, K'ang T'ai and Chu Ying, who visited it during the period A.D. 245-250 and, while there, gathered accounts of a large number of other South Sea kingdoms. It was these envoys who recorded the local tradition that the kingdom of Fu-nan had been founded by an Indian named Kaundinya, who came by sea and married the local chieftainess. This tradition is accepted by all authorities, who date the event towards the end of the first century A.D. Kaundinya's family was replaced by indigenous kings who used the name *Fan*, now known to have been an ethnic one.[9] But at a period considered to be in the first half of the fifth century A.D., a second Kaundinya came by sea from P'an-p'an to Fu-nan and Indianized the kingdom afresh. All the later kings of Fu-nan claimed to be of the Kaundinya family, which is known from Mysore inscriptions to have been a prominent one in South India during the second and fourth centuries A.D.[10] P'an-p'an was clearly an Indianized kingdom somewhere on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula and was bounded at its north by the Indianized kingdom called Lang-ya-hsiu by the Chinese. The *Liang shu* says that the traditional founding of Lang-ya-hsiu occurred 400 years before A.D. 515. The name continues to appear in various forms up to the sixteenth century A.D. and is considered in all the forms to represent the Malay name *Langkasuka*. Although its boundaries may have changed from time to time, it was always centred in Patani.

Among the accounts taken back to China by K'ang T'ai and Chu Ying is one of a place called Tun-sun, which had a port apparently of the same name. It contained five kingdoms (unnamed), all of which were vassals of Fu-nan. The region of Tun-sun would appear to have been the northern part of the Malay Peninsula, if not the whole, and its port must clearly have been on the west coast, since it was a main entrepôt to which merchants came in great numbers to barter and where people from the East and West met. There never has been a main entrepôt on the east coast of the Peninsula owing to the meteorological conditions there. The western side of Tun-sun was in relation with India and the eastern with Indo-China. The Chinese account shows quite clearly that Tun-sun

[9] Gaspardone, *op. cit.*, pp. 480-3; R. A. Stein, "Le Lin-yi, sa Contribution à la Formation du Champa et ses Liens avec la Chine", *Han-hiue*, vol. 2 (Peking, 1947), pp. 251-58.

[10] B. R. Chatterjee, "Recent Advances in Kambuja Studies", *Journal of the Greater India Society* (London, 1931), p. 139.

was Indianized by the first half of the third century A.D., since it says that 500 families of Indians[11] lived there, as well as 1,000 Brahmans who intermarried with the local people, and that there were two Buddhist monuments. That would indicate that Tun-sun must have been already Indianized for some time and enable the date of that Indianization to be carried back to the second century A.D. at least.

There is archaeological and epigraphical evidence which proves a marked Indianization in Kedah (including Province Wellesley) during the Gupta period from *c.* A.D. 400; and there may have been an Indian or Indianized settlement in the Kinta Valley, Perak, during the Gupta period of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.[12] It is accepted generally that the Tamil name Kalagam which occurs in the *Paṭṭinappalai* is the same as the Tamil names *Kadaram* and *Kidaram* and the Sanskrit *Kataba*, all identified with Kedah. If this is so, then Kedah was known to the Tamils as early as that poem which "cannot be placed later than the end of the second century A.D."[13]

Unfortunately, there is no evidence of any certainty with regard to Indianization in Sumatra prior to the seventh century A.D. It is continually said that the Chinese name *Kan-t'o-li*, which appears in the *Liang Shu* as having sent an embassy to China during the period A.D. 454-462, was Sumatra. But the only geographical information is that it was on a *chou* in the South Sea and there is no mention of gold among its products, which would be extraordinary if it were Sumatra. When the identification is analysed, it will be found to rest upon Chinese tradition in 1879 and a fancied resemblance between *Kan-t'o-li* and *Andelas* or *Andalas*, a Malay name applied to Sumatra according to evidence which is very many centuries later than the Chinese name. There is more probability that the Chinese name *P'i-ch'ien* applied to some part of Sumatra. The account of it was carried back to China by K'ang T'ai and Chu Ying and, therefore, dates from the first half of the third century A.D.[14] The only geographical information is that it was beyond Tun-sun on a *chou* in the Great

[11] The word used is *hu*, which normally indicates Central Asians: Pelliot thought that merchants might be indicated, as the *hu* were distinguished in the passage from the Brahmans.

[12] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya", *JMBRAS.*, vol. 18, pt. I (1940), pp. 1-50; Dorathy C. and H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Further Work on Indian Sites in Malaya", *JMBRAS.*, vol. 20 (1947), pp. 1-11.

[13] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Kataha", *Journal of the Greater India Society*, vol. 5 (Calcutta, 1938), pp. 128-46, and *Sri Vijaya*, pp. 25-26: see also the present author, *JMBRAS.*, vol. 22 (1949), pt. I, pp. 5-15.

[14] For English translation see G. H. Luce, "Countries neighbouring Burma", *Journal of the Burma Research Society* (Rangoon, 1925), vol. 14, pt. 2, pp. 148-49.

Sea, but it was clearly a very wealthy gold-producing country. "There is a mountain which produces gold; the gold appears in the stone in immense quantities. . . In this country they do not receive foreign merchants; if any happen to come, they kill them also and eat them. So no trader ventures to go there." P'i-ch'ien was in communication with Fu-nan, often sending embassies and vessels of pure gold for fifty persons. This kingdom will be mentioned again in connection with Malayadvipa. The earliest archaeological evidence of Indianization in Sumatra is provided by the huge granite figure of Buddha, twelve feet high, which was discovered on Bukit Seguntang, near Palembang. A fragmentary stone statuette, also Buddhist, was discovered on the same hill, and higher up the river another stone Buddhist statue. But the dating of all these is too controversial for anything certain to be said, though it is likely that the first one may date within the period of this paper.[15]

All the Indian scholars who have tried to identify the six sub-dvipas mentioned in Chapter 48 of the Vayu-Purana place them in the region known as *dvipantara,* though they do not agree on the identifications; and it seems to be clear that it is this region to which we must look. To this day people in Madras call the Malaysian region by the general name of *dvipantara,* the Prakritic form. Kalidasa writes of ocean-going ships and merchants making sea-voyages for the purpose of commerce. He mentions the *dvipantara* and associates it with cloves. It is the general opinion that the ancient *dvipantara* indicates Malaysia and possibly also the mainland of Indo-China. The word itself means 'island-continent beyond' and thus indicates a region overseas. Of the six sub-dvipas, Malayadvipa receives the most detailed description. Many have taken it to indicate the Malay Peninsula, but the late Professor Ramachandra Dikshitar identified it with Sumatra,[16] and this, it is submitted, is the only identification which will answer to the facts. Malayadvipa "has mines of precious stones and gold, besides sandalwood and ocean mines. It is full of groups of Mlecchas and has many rivers and hills." Its *Kulaparvata,* 'chief mountain', is Malaya "and contains silver mines. The noble mountain is reported as the Mahamalaya. A second mountain (is there) Mandara by name, a beautiful hill with flowers and fruits resorted to by *devarsis* (divine sages). There is the venerable abode of Agastya revered by *devas* and *asuras.*" There was another mountain called *Kancapada* in Professor Nilakanta Sastri's translation but given as *Kancanapada* by Professor Ramachandra Dikshitar.[17] This was a holy hermitage rich in kusa grass and soma, a veritable Paradise, in

15 See discussion by Nilankanta Sastri, *op. cit.,* pp. 102-05.
16 *Some Aspects of the Vayu Purana* (1933), p. 50.
17 *The Purana Index,* vol. I, p. 344.

every *parva* (part) of which Heaven is said to descend. "In the same way there is the Trikuta nilaya, in height many yojanas and full of charming caves and crests. In its top is the great city of Lanka with palatial buildings, ever contented and prosperous. Its area is 100 by 30 yojanas. It is the residence of great Raksasas who can assume different disguises and who were defiant enemies of the devas. It is inaccessible to ordinary human beings. In front of that dvipa and on the shore of the sea, there is a great Siva temple known as Gokarna."

It is clear that in this description there is a large transference of names from ancient India. Colonists have always had the habit of transferring names from their own home-lands to their new settlements and the ancient Indians were no exception. Nearly all their place-names in South-East Asia have counterparts in ancient India. The Malaya Mountain of Kalidasa was composed of the Anamalai and Elamalai mountains, still known as the Malaya Range. These mountains form the southern part of the Western Ghats from the Palghat Gap to Cape Comorin. Malayalam, 'land at the foot of the mountain', is the name for the narrow plain along the Malabar coast. It is the country of the Nair caste and is called *Kerala* by Kalidasa and the Vayu Purana. Kerala is another form of *Chera,* one of the three great Tamil kingdoms, the others being *Chola* and *Pandya.* The language called Malayalam is a comparatively new one and during the period of this paper Tamil was spoken in Kerala.[18] Our name Malabar comes from the Arabic *Malaya-bar,* which in turn derives from the Sanskrit *Malaya-vara,* 'mountain country', Tamil *Malai-nadu.* Malayadvipa means 'mountain island-continent', and, if the name Malaya was transferred, as is suggested, from Malabar to Sumatra, nothing could be more natural. When one passes out of what used to be British India into Cochin and Travancore, it is as if one had entered Sumatra. The mountains, the flora and the general landscape, with the saddle-backed roofs to houses and bullock-carts make the illusion almost complete. The topographical resemblance of the Malabar coast to the west coast of Sumatra is equally remarkable. Right down the Malabar coast, and never very far from the sea, there runs the chain of the Western Ghats, broken only by the remarkable Palghat Gap, some sixteen miles in width, through which there is land passage to the Carnatic plain and the Coromandel coast. These Ghats in their entirety run for 1,000 miles from the Konkan coast to Cape Comorin. Right down the west coast of Sumatra there runs a chain of mountain ranges, never very far from the sea, and broken by a remarkable medial trough, not more than twenty miles

[18] Until the tenth century A.D. See K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, *HCIP.*, vol. 2, p. 289.

wide, through which there is land passage to the east coast of Sumatra. From or near the two sets of mountains three historically important rivers flow to the east—in India, the Krishna, the Godavari, and the Kaveri; in Sumatra, the Kampar, the Jambi, and the Palembang or Ayer Musi. Since the name Malaya first appears in Sumatra, and since Malay traditional history in the Sejarah Malayu starts in Sumatra, we must look to that island as the home of the name, and it is perfectly rational to derive it from Sanskrit *malaya*, Tamil *malai*. Indeed, no other derivation has ever been suggested.

Where, then, did the ancient Indians first intrude into Sumatra? And from where did they come? The archaeology of South-East Asia has not yet emerged from the exploratory stage. If there is archaeological evidence for anything, so much the better; but, if there is not, reasoning *ex silentio*, always dangerous anywhere, is quite out of place where this region is concerned. On the other hand, reasoning *a priori* is both useful and essential, provided that it is not allowed to obsess the mind. Sumatra presents the most unusual characteristic that its centres of civilization and its most heavily populated districts are not upon the coast but lie inland, principally in highlands. This is the natural result of the physiography of the island. The east coast from Tanjongbalai southwards, in the words of Professor Dobby,[19] is "a forest-covered swamp" and "an obstacle to settlement and approach from the east, sparsely inhabited and undeveloped, the largest and most continuous example of Southeast Asia equatorial swamp still beyond the control of human technology." Wet padi planting is confined to a few deltaic embayments on the Achin coast, and in the upper valleys of the Ayer Musi and the Batang Tari on the flanks of Korinchi "as vestiges of the prosperous principalities of the first millennium when Indian colonisation reached its peak."[20] The seaboard of the east coast is flanked by low-lying swamps and swampy islands without landmarks, and only the regions of Palembang and Jambi have any ancient history. The former lies about fifty miles up the Ayer Musi and the latter about eighty-five miles up the Jambi River. The history of each begins in the seventh century A.D. By far the largest portion of the population are the Minangkabau, who are distributed from the middle of the island to the west coast; there is more intensive settlement in the Padang highlands than anywhere else; and there is fairly dense settlement in the Batak highlands.

The depictions which we possess of ancient commercial sailing vessels—Greek, Roman, Phoenician, Persian and Indian—show that

[19] *Southeast Asia* (London, 1950), pp. 198-99.
[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 210-11.

none of them could have sailed against the wind. The Periplus, the Chinese records and the Arab ones show that they used only the favouring monsoons and land breezes. We know, fortunately, what an Indian commercial ship of the second century A.D. looked like, since it is depicted upon the coins of the Andhra King, Yajna Satakarni, c. A.D. 170-199. She is roomy and round-hulled with two tall masts carrying large, square sails suspended from a yard at the top of the mast, and could not have sailed against the wind. The same type of ship appears on Pallava coins some centuries later, but no sails are shown on these.[21] The Malabar coast was the scene of a most active sea-trade during the early centuries of the Christian era and was more handy for sailing down to the west coast of Sumatra than was the Coromandel coast. The voyage by the outer route in the open sea westward of the islands, though requiring navigational care, was suitable for the coastal voyaging which the ancient seamen preferred. The little port of Sibolga lies in a cove at the north-eastern end of Tapanuli Bay, where there is the best and most sheltered anchorage north of Padang. Tanjong Batu Buro, at the northern entrance to the Bay, is a mark of considerable height, and Lake Toba, the heart of the Batak country, lies behind the Bay with easy land passage to it from Sibolga. Padang possesses in its Road the best and most sheltered anchorage on the west coast, marked by Mount Talang, 8,520 ft. high, and Padang Hill, 1,056 ft. It would have been an excellent anchorage for the ancient Indian ships, though not suitable for modern needs. There is easy access by land from Padang into the Padang highlands and to Bukit Tinggi (Fort de Kock), the real cradle of the Minangkabau people.

Upon *a priori* reasoning, therefore, Sibolga and Padang would be the points from which Indian intrusion into Sumatra came, and the Malabar coast would be the place from which the intruders sailed. The Minangkabau have a general tradition that their parent stock came from South India and landed upon the west coast of Sumatra, and they have a system of mother-right which is foreign to Malay life in general and suggests outside influence from a people such as the matriarchal Nairs of the Malabar coast.

Turning now to the description of Malayadvipa, it should be noted first that Agastya was the patron saint of Tamil civilization.[22] His name is preserved in that of the mountain which Kalidasa called *Agastakuta* and which is known today as Agastya Malai. This is the

[21] For reproductions of these Andhra and Pallava ships see Schoff, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

[22] See K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Agastya", *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-* etc. (Batavia, 1936), vol. 76, no. 4, pp. 471-545 and *A History of South India* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 66-74.

southern peak of the Anamalai mountains, about twenty miles north-eastward of Trivandrum, the capital of Travancore. The sacred river *Tamraparni* had its source on this mountain and has the local name today of Tambravarni. It discharges into the Gulf of Mannar and was famous from very ancient times for its pearl fisheries. The legendary cradle of Tamil civilization lay on the Tamraparni River at Korkai (the *Kolchoi* of the Periplus and Ptolemy), which was the traditional home of the three eponymous brothers Pandiyan, Solan and Ceran, the founders of the three great Tamil nations and kingdoms, Pandya, Chola and Chera. These brothers find their places in the strange genealogies of the Sejarah Malayu as Raja Pandyan, Raja Chulan and Raja Jiran. The tradition recorded in ancient Indian literature, and particularly in Tamil, says that Agastya left India and travelled far south, so that in the Puranas the emphasis with regard to him shifts overseas and the Vayu-Purana places his venerable abode (*asrama*) on the Mandara Mountain in Malayadvipa. Inscriptions prove that the cult of Agastya was a remarkable feature in South-East Asia, and that it took deep root in Sumatra, Java and Bali.

Mandara was a mountain famed in Indian mythology and sacred to Siva, who went there after spending his honeymoon on Mount Meru. *Trikuta* means 'three peaked' and *nilaya* 'home'. Kalidasa records that King Raghu conquered Kerala at Trikuta and that its three peaks served as the pillars of victory. It has been plausibly identified as a hill to the west of Nasik. *Gokarna* is mentioned by Kalidasa, and was a celebrated place of pilgrimage. It is identified with Gendia in North Kanara, some thirty miles south of Goa, and there is a famed temple of Siva at Gendia. Gokarnasramin was a deity who was supposed to dwell on the summit of Mahendra Mountain, that is to say the Eastern Ghats. The writer has found no counterpart in ancient India for Kancapada or Kancanapada, but kusa grass (*Poa cynosuroides*) is a special grass used by the Brahman caste for worship, for example, on New Moon days, and Brahman sages, when contemplating God, sit upon a mat made from kusa grass. The juice of the soma plant was the favourite drink of the gods. In the Vedas, Mlecchas were indigenous people of barbarian tongue who seem to have been friendly to the Aryas when they invaded India, and the name came to be applied to all friendly indigenous peoples. The Raksasas were most unfriendly and the Ramayana tells of the great war in which Rama, King of the Aryas, conquered Ravana, King of the Raksasas, whose capital was *Lanka*. The *yojana* was a land-measure of uncertain distance, usually stated as a league; but in verse composition such as the Vayu-Purana must not be treated literally.

Reading between the lines of the description of Malayadvipa, one gets the impression that the Indians found two types of indigenous peoples in the place. There were those with whom they were able to mingle, and to these they applied the name Mlecchas. There were those who stayed in their high fastnesses, would not allow the Indians into their country, and rejected the Indian gods. To these the Indians gave the name Raksasas and the name of Lanka to their capital. There is very general agreement with the view of Professor Heine-Geldern that Hindu-Sumatran culture took birth at the very latest during the second century A.D., and, if evidence can be adduced from Sumatra whereby the Trikuta nilaya can be identified, the rest of the description of *Malayadvipa*, will fall into place. This evidence, however, needs some introduction.

It is certain that when the Indians first came to Malaysia and Indo-China they found in existence at various places culture-groups of the same basic type, for the over-all pattern of which 'Indonesian civilization' is a convenient description, though no form of writing used by these groups has been discovered. This civilization reached its peak during the period of bronze culture called Dong-s'on. The 'Indonesian civilization' was accompanied throughout by the practice of the megalithic cult, and the most remarkable feature of its Dong-s'on phase was the use of bronze drums, considered as cult objects with supernatural powers, like the gongs still in use amongst certain ethnic groups in northern Annam and Tongking. During the best period of the Dong-s'on culture the drums bear depictions of human and religious scenes from which scholars have been able to build some picture of the final phase of the 'Indonesian civilization' and to point to some affinities with the manners and customs of the Dayaks in Borneo. Though the exact period of the Dong-s'on culture cannot be fixed, it is agreed provisionally at present that in its homeland on the mainland of Indo-China it began in the fourth or third century B.C. and lasted to about the end of the Later Han dynasty.

The name Minangkabau, which the late Professor Van der Tuuk considered to mean 'original home', was recorded first in A.D 1365, and it is considered that at that time it was commensurate with the kingdom of Malayu which stretched from the Padang Highlands south through Korinchi and east beyond Jambi. The Sultanate of Minangkabau was founded at the beginning of the seventeenth century A.D., when its ruler became converted to the Muslim faith.

The sacred Gunong Dempo with its twin peaks, Lumut and Merapi, rises 10,364 ft. half-way along the plateau of Pasemah, and on that plateau there is a most important group of megalithic monuments with menhirs, dolmens, stone troughs, slab-graves, terrace

buildings and stone images. These last show two distinctly different styles, a primitive and indigenous one and a later more evolved one with statues of single figures and groups. This later style is thought to derive from some colonizing movements from the mainland of south-eastern Asia between 200 and 100 B.C. It is clear that the Dong-s'on phase of the 'Indonesian civilization' was present in the Pasemah culture. Amongst the sculptures there is a stone representation of a Dong-s'on bronze drum, and on the Danau Gadang tea-estate near Korinchi Lake there was found a full-sized bronze drum of the type shown in the stone sculpture, while two more such drums were found in the Lampong country further south. A sea-trade with the mainland of Indo-China is proved by these bronze drums and also by finds of Han dynasty artifacts (including bronze ones) in southern Sumatra, on the borders between the Jambi and Korinchi countries, on the Danau Gadang estate, and on the borders of the Korinchi country where the most remarkable of all was found—a piece of a vase bearing the stamp of a Chinese date corresponding to 45 B.C. It is not possible to say exactly when the Pasemah culture passed out of existence but it seems safe to say upon the archaeological evidence that it was still flourishing during the first two or three centuries A.D. The warriors and the fierce human types represented in the more evolved sculptures would be just the kind to attract to themselves the name of Raksasa from the early Indians. The whole evidence taken together shows that the Pasemah people were warlike and prosperous. The three-peaked Dempo and the Pasemah plateau answer to Trikuta nilaya, and the remains of structures on the plateau with the sculptures answer to the great city of Lanka. Furthermore, the name Lanka plays a considerable part in old Malay tradition and has a marked connection with Sumatra. A Sultan of Minangkabau during the eighteenth century A.D. stated in a letter that God sent a speaking-bird named Hocinet to look for a spot on which an inheritance might be established and "the first place he alighted upon was the fertile island of Lankapura, situated between Palembang and Jambi, and from there sprung the famous Kingdom of Manancabow."[23] Thus, the city (*pura*) of Lanka lingered through the centuries in Sumatran traditional memory.

But the strangest thing of all is that the ability of the Raksasas to assume different disguises, though a belief concerning them in ancient India, has a remarkable explanation for this part of Sumatra, which can be stated best in the words of that eminent Malayan

[23] W. Marsden, *The History of Sumatra* (London, 1811), pp. 338-40: here *pulau* is translated as 'island'; but, as has been noted above, it had a wider meaning in Sumatra.

authority, the late Mr. R. J. Wilkinson:[24] "If we ask a Peninsular Malay what he calls a were-tiger he will tell us *kemering* or (Upper Perak) *chenaku;* he will insist also that all Korinchi Malays were were-tigers and can assume tiger-shape whenever they like and for as long as they like. A Sumatran (Minangkabau) Malay calls a were-tiger *chindaku.* Now it is a curious fact that Kemering (or Komering), Korinchi and Chenaku (or Chindaku) are all Sumatran districts and are the part of Sumatra linked most closely with the megalithic civilization that produced these slab-graves. The Han bronze weapons which help to date this culture were found in the Komering or Kemering valley; the finest slab-grave of all is in the Pasemah country to which the Kemering gives access; the Han-dated vase was found on the borders of the Korinchi country; and the bronze gong and many other relics found on the Danau Gadang tea-estate are all from the Korinchi country. About Chindaku I know less."

With the Trikuta nilaya identified as Gunong Dempo and the Pasemah plateau, the Malaya Mountain will be the southern two-thirds of the Sumatran mountain chain which is called the Barisan Range, and Mahamalaya will be Korinchi, 12,484 ft., the highest mountain in Sumatra.[25] Where then will the Mandara Mountain be located? The holy place of Malay and Minankabau tradition is Bukit Seguntang, called Siguntang-guntang locally, a hill near Palembang, with which the Kings of Srivijaya were closely associated as their inscriptions of the seventh century A.D. show, and which was the cause of these kings being known to the Arabs as the Maharajahs of the Mountain. Adoration of the mountain was as strongly imbedded in the 'Indonesian civilization' as was the megalithic cult; and the mountain still plays its part in Malay thought.[26] The antiquity of Bukit Seguntang as a holy place is attested by the Buddhist statuary found upon it, of which the huge granite figure of Buddha is the most ancient. This figure is made unique by its size and, because of that unique size, seems to emphasize the peculiar veneration of the people for the hill upon which they erected it. This hill appears in the Sejarah Malayu as Bukit Si-Guntang Mahameru and is the scene of the appearance of three Indian princes, one of whom becomes Raja of Palembang with the consent of the local 'Indonesian' chieftain Broad Leaf, who abdicates in his favour. There cannot be the slightest doubt that this tradition is in reality that of

[24] "The Bernam Slab-Graves", *JMBRAS.*, vol. 17, pt. 1 (1939), pp. 136-7.
[25] Kurinci is an ancient Tamil word for mountain—Compiler.
[26] W. Linehan, "Tin Emblems of Mountain-Temples (Gunong-Gunong)", *JMBRAS.*, vol. 24, pt. 3 (1951), pp. 99-103; R. Winstedt, *The Malays* (London, 1950), pp. 66-69.

the founding of the Kingdom of Srivijaya, the history of which begins in the last quarter of the seventh century A.D. The range of opinion with regard to the dating of the granite Buddha places it not later than the fifth or sixth century A.D., and the antiquity of Bukit Seguntang as a holy place is thus carried back for nearly two centuries before it became the Mountain of the Kings of Srivijaya. It can be identified with the holy mountain Mandara of Malayadvipa accordingly. For Kancapada or Kancanapada, no more can be said except that it might have indicated some hill region beyond Bukit Seguntang. The Siva temple known as Gokarna, which was opposite Malayadvipa and on the shore, will be a place in the ancient Indian settlement of Kedah.

Both gold and silver were mined in Sumatra during the Dutch regime and the references to those metals in Malayadvipa are appropriate to the proposed identification. The Portuguese noted in the sixteenth century A.D. that Minangkabau was the best gold area in Sumatra. The curious expression 'ocean mines' occurs in other ancient Indian contexts but does not seem to have been explained by any Indian scholar. There are regions in Malaysia where grains of alluvial gold are to be found in the sands along the sea-shore. Eredia in the seventeenth century A.D. mentioned that he had seen Malays sifting the sands along the shore north of Malacca Fort and getting gold,[27] and to the writer's personal knowledge this could still be done at low tide twenty years ago. Sumatra is *par excellence* the gold island of Malaysia. Its Malay name is Palau Mas, 'gold island'; in the seventh century A.D. the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim I-Ching called it *Chin-chou,* 'gold island'; and Suvarnadvipa, a Sanskrit name for it, has the same meaning. Indian scholars unfortunately do not seem to be interested in historical geography and it is, therefore, not easy to trace the antiquity of the old Indian place-names or their subsequent history; but, apparently, it is not until Somadeva's *Katha-sarit-sagara* of the eleventh century A.D. that Suvarnadvipa is made clearly to apply to Sumatra; and that name therefore does not militate against the identification of the earlier Malayadvipa as Sumatra.

The high table-lands of western Sumatra have been suggested above as the scene of the earliest Indian penetration into the island and, upon the assumption that Malayadvipa was Sumatra, it would appear that during the period to which Chapter 48 of the Vayu-Purana must be ascribed the Indians had been able to mingle with the groups of people whom they called Mleccha but not with those

[27] J. V. Mills, "Eredia's Description of Malacca, Meridional India and Cathay", *JMBRAS.*, vol. 3 (1930), p. 233.

whom they called Raksasa. It has been suggested that the latter were the mountain-people in the Pasemah country, who were clearly 'Indonesian' in civilzation. Who then were the former? The whole story of Indianization, where it can be traced with certainty, is one of acceptance by 'Indonesians' of the Indian civilization. We find a continuance of pre-Hindu 'Indonesian' beliefs during the period of Indianization and even vestiges of them existing to this very day, as Sir Richard Winstedt has emphasized so aptly.[28] He draws attention to the shamanism of 'Indonesian' peoples and the way in which ideas connected with the 'Indonesian' magician ruler are still to be found in Malay and Minangkabau conceptions of royalty. The present Batak region in Sumatra is contained within the parallels of 4°N and 1°50'N. The point of ingress into it is Tapanuli Bay and, if Indian penetration into Sumatra came from the west coast of the island, this bay, which is the first fully sheltered anchorage to be reached from India, can be assumed to have been the earliest point of penetration. Lake Toba, the heartland of the Bataks, lies to the north-east of this bay with the Karo Mountains immediately to the north of the lake. The other most important Batak region, the district of Padang Lawas, lies parallel with Tapanuli Bay but much further inland to the east. The Batak country continues in the south to the regions of the Natal tribes and the Great and Little Mandailing tribes, all of whom have been influenced very much by the Minangkabau to their south. We have no means of knowing exactly what the ancestors of the Bataks were like, but they would appear to have been 'Indonesians' who received Indianization, and so to have followed the general pattern. When the Bataks were conquered by the Dutch in 1907, they were headed by a divine chieftain known as the Singa Maharadja, who appears to have held no temporal power but to have been a master priest or magician king.[29] The similarity between the houses of the Toba Bataks and those depicted upon a Dong-s'on drum has been remarked, together with the same resemblance in the case of Minangkabau houses.[30] Professor Cole says in regard to Batak religious beliefs, "Direct questioning usually leads to high beings bearing Sanskrit names. They are considered powerful and enough interested in human affairs to appear at times in the ceremonies or sacrifices, but in general they are remote from everyday affairs. Among them is a creator, a trinity, and a lesser group classed together under the term *debata*": [31] and of these last one is the Demon Huntsman, who is known to the Proto-

[28] *The Malays* (London, 1950); *The Malay Magician* (London, 1951).
[29] Fay-Cooper Cole, *The peoples of Malaysia* (New York, 1945), pp. 271-74.
[30] Winstedt, *The Malays*, p. 162.
[31] Cole, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-75.

Malay Jakuns of the Peninsula, and another is the Naga, who as Sesha, the thousand-hooded cobra, formed the couch of Vishnu. Even the Buddha himself became a Naga. There is thus clear evidence from Batak religious beliefs of an 'Indonesian' substratum and an Indian overlay. More than sixty years ago Kern drew attention to the five sub-divisions of the Simbiring tribe of Karo Bataks, Choliya, Pandiya, Meliyala, Depari, and Pelawi, in which he recognized the South Indian names of Chola, Pandya, Malayalam, and Pallava. Depari still remains a mystery. The Keling, that is, South Indian, origin of the Simbirings is recognized as a fact by all the other Karo Bataks.

Enough has been shown, therefore, to prove a strong Indianization at one time amongst the ancestors of the Bataks, who were fundamentally 'Indonesian'. It will be appreciated that this term 'Indonesian' is used in a very loose sense and merely as one of convenience. In point of fact, there is no agreement among anthropologists as to what the term means or to what physical groups it should be applied, and it is often used as though it were the same as 'Proto Malay' or 'Pre-Malay'. In the present state of knowledge it is impossible to define what exactly an 'Indonesian' is either physically or culturally. But what does seem to emerge is that Indianization in Malaysia and Indo-China was accepted by various culture-groups amongst whom there was a general pattern of similarity, and the term 'Indonesian' is applied in this paper to any peoples or tribes who can be said to fall within that general pattern, even though not exactly within it. The early Chinese records into T'ang times recognize this general similarity of pattern in the South Sea and call it K'un-lun, speaking of K'un-lun slaves, K'un-lun country, K'un-lun people, K'un-lun language and K'un-lun ships.

If the Raksasas of Malayadvipa were the people of the Pasemah plateau, the people of the Batak highlands would be among the Mlecchas; and, if these interpretations are correct, Chapter 48 of the Vayu-Purana shows that Indianization in Sumatra began in the northern half of the island and reached the southern half later. If Professor Heine-Geldern's view is accepted that Hindu-Sumatran culture took birth at the very latest during the second century A.D., that date can be applied to the Indianization in the northern half of the island. But, if Malayadvipa is accepted as having indicated Sumatra, that date cannot be applied to the southern half in view of the statements about the Raksasas, provided that they were the Pasemah people. There cannot be any possible doubt that these Pasemah people fell fully and properly within the orbit of the 'Indonesian civilization' and that its Dong-s'on phase was present among them, nor can there be any possible doubt that the Dong-s'on

phase was present also in the much wider area which has been stated above. The presence of Dong-s'on bronze drums and of Han objects in this wider area is definite proof of a sea-trade with Indo-China and the question arises, "Who conducted this sea-trade?" Here the identification, if possible, of P'i-ch'ien becomes very relevant, because the Chinese evidence proves that Chinese shipping itself did not trade into the South Sea during the period covered by this paper. On the other hand, there is a description of K'un-lun shipping which appears to date back to the third century A.D.,[32] which is the period of the facts concerning P'i-ch'ien. Communication between P'i-ch'ien and Fu-nan must have been by sea, and the jealousy displayed by P'i-ch'ien against the intrusion of foreign merchants is completely in keeping with what we know about other ancient people whose prosperity came from their sea-trade. The identification of P'i-ch'ien will be approached accordingly upon the *a priori* presumption that it was a state with a seaboard and engaged in a sea-trade with the Indo-Chinese mainland.

The account of P'i-ch'ien[33] was carried back to China in the third century A.D. by the Chinese envoys K'ang T'ai and Chu Ying together with the account of Tun-sun and appears in the Liang Shu as an appendage to the latter account. The only key to the location of P'i-ch'ien is provided by two master facts: (1) it was rich in gold; (2) it was beyond Tun-sun on an island (*chou*) in the Great Sea. With Tun-sun identified as the northern part, if not the whole, of the Malay Peninsula, the only identification of P'i-ch'ien which will fit the two master facts is Sumatra, and the statement that it was in the Great Sea does not militate against that identification. It is true that eventually the 'Great Sea' becomes clear as having been the South China Sea as far south as the Straits of Malacca, but the account of Tun-sun makes it clear that at that time (the third century A.D.) the bounds of the Great Sea were not known. According to the Chinese envoys no ship had ever travelled over it and to them, therefore, the Great Sea was merely a generic name for the whole unknown ocean expanse, part of which washed the shores of Fu-nan and doubtless the rest of the Indo-Chinese seaboard to the Gulf of Tongking.

The account of the King of P'i-ch'ien is worthy of notice. He was supernatural and holy, and had not died from ancient times, so that no one knew his age. "The good and bad actions of the people of his kingdom, the things of the future—there is not one of which the king is not aware. Thus no one dares to impose on him. In the king-

[32] P. Pelliot, "Quelques Textes Chinois concernant l'Indo-Chine Hindouisée", *Etudes Asiatiques*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1925), pp. 243-63.

[33] See p. 166, footnote 14, above.

doms of the south they call him the Long-Necked King. . . his sons and grandsons are born and die like ordinary men; the king alone does not die." Here we seem to have an attempt to describe an 'Indonesian' master-priest or magician king, whose office was immortal though its occupants lived and died. It is stated in the account that the king knew how to write Indian books and an attempt is made to explain one such book. This, however, is not evidence that P'i-ch'ien was Indianized. On the contrary, the effect of the account is to show that it was not, because foreign traders were not allowed to enter the country and the kingly office was not Indianized but 'Indonesian' in character. His knowledge of Indian writing might well have been acquired for the purpose of his relations with the highly Indianized kingdom of Fu-nan. According to the tradition preserved in the Sejarah Malayu Palembang was an 'Indonesian' state at the time when the three Indian princes arrived and the four seventh century inscriptions of Srivijaya show clearly that the 'Indonesian' organization was retained, because the outer districts were governed by *datus*, an office unknown to India but fundamentally an 'Indonesian' one. It is not impossible that P'i-ch'ien should be looked for in the Palembang region, that this region gradually received Indian influences and that Buddhism became implanted there at some time prior to the erection of the huge granite Buddha on Bukit Seguntang, which was not later than the fifth or sixth century A.D. It must not be assumed that all the facts in Chapter 48 of the Vayu-Purana are exactly contemporaries. If the Mandara mountain were Bukit Seguntang, it would mean that by some time towards A.D. 400 the people of the Palembang region had become Mlecchas; and the passage about the Gokarna temple, if that were in Kedah, would be more or less synchronous. But the prehistory of Sumatra has not yet been worked out in the time periods, nor has that of Kedah.

The purpose of this paper is to provoke thought and, though its content is speculative, it is none the worse for that. The following words of the American Professor Hyde [34] form an apt quotation with which to conclude: "In cases of this kind where the evidence is meager it is well to remember that what is at issue is not a point of exact law, but an event of history, a field in which absolute truth is unattainable and interpretation must ordinarily resort to a certain amount of surmise." If any satisfactory picture of ancient times in Malaysia is ever to be drawn, it will only be by taking a broad common-sense view of the wood and applying reasonable surmise to the available facts, but most assuredly not by an academic

[34] W. W. Hyde, *Ancient Greek Mariners* (New York, 1947), p. 239.

agitation concerning the leaves, branches and trunks of the trees.

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Chapter Seven

RELIGION

I. Regional Cults

In the development of regional culture, regional religious cults and worship constituted important factors. Some of these cults and modes of worship continue even today. P. T. SRINIVASA AIYANGAR, a pioneer and erudite research worker in this field, writes about these cults in several pages of his books *Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture,* and *History of the Tamils from the Earliest Times to 600* A.D. The following reading is taken from the *History of the Tamils from the Earliest Times to 600* A.D., pages 75-83, Coomaraswamy Naidu and Sons, Madras, 1929.

NO DOUBT FROM the earliest ages of the evolution of man he worshipped some god or gods. In those early days the people were divided into totem-groups, the relics of which are found in tribal names like Irular, Vanniar, etc. In Sanskrit literature we meet with such totem-names as the Vānaras, the monkey tribe, the Ajas, the goat tribes, the Garuḍas, the kite tribe, the Matsyas, the fish tribe, the Vṛṣṇis, the ram tribe, and the Nāgas, the serpent tribe, etc. Of these the Nāgas seem to have been widely prevalent, because we find them in historic times, occupying the North East, the North West, the Central and the South Indian provinces. The Nāga cult probably arose among the cave-dwellers of the hill-country. Besides the totem gods, the people worshipped numerous spirits, those inhabiting trees, rivers, hills; also local gods, guardian deities of villages, the goddesses guarding the boundaries of villages and the demons that caused diseases. Most of these ancient cults exists today in their primitive crudity among the lower classes of the popu-

lation and even the higher classes have not totally given up resorting to the help of these spirits in times of difficulty. Some of these cults have also been absorbed by higher cults which mark a higher stage of civilization. Thus the Nāga cult became coalesced with that of Murugan who was again identified with Subrahmaṇya of the Āryas; for even today, Subrahmaṇya appears to the physical eyes of his devotees only in the form of a serpent; when a devotee of this god has invoked his help, the appearance of a serpent means that the god has granted the prayer. Tree cults have coalesced with the Śiva cult. The most famous of existing Śiva shrines are intimately associated with some tree or other. So too the cult of the health-giving Tulasi plant has coalesced with the worship of Viṣṇu. From the Nāga cult Śiva got his numerous serpent-ornaments, and Viṣṇu his couch of the thousand headed serpent. The Buddha became himself a Nāga and several Bauddha and Jaina saints got five serpent-heads.

But long before these advanced cults, called Āgamika, arose, higher gods than the local demons or the spirits inhabiting trees, rivers and hills, were evolved in the country. These gods were evolved in each region separately and in accordance with the geographical characteristics of each region. The god of the hilly region was the Red God (Seyon), also called Murugan, who was the patron of pre-nuptial love. He was offered by his worshippers balls of rice mixed with the red blood of goats killed in his behalf. He was a hunter and carried the Vel or spear and was hence called Velan, spearman. His priest was also called Velan. This god created the love-frenzy in girls; and when girls were obsessed by him, the priest performed magic rites for curing the love-sick girl. When the priest was in communion with the god, he was also seized with the divine frenzy and sang and danced a devil-dance (Veṛiyāṭṭam). Women, too, took part in priestly functions. Men or women priests, when under the influence of the god, not only sang and danced but also read the dim past, predicted the future, diagnosed diseases (and the particular demons that caused each disease), and cured all the ills that the flesh and the brain were heir to. The means of cure were not solely supernatural for, as the hilly region abounded in simples, the magic of the priests and priestesses was fortified by the use of drugs. Hence the early priest was also the medicine-man and even today, notwithstanding millenniums of philosophical evolution, the devil priest-cum-medicine-man of the degraded Kuṛavar tribe drives a flourishing trade among the *élite* of society, on the sly.

The god of the pastoral region—Mullai—was the Black God (Māyon), who was a herdsman, beloved both of milkmaids and of

cattle. He was always uttering sweet music with the flute (kuḷal) and its music moved all nature. Besides singing, he delighted in dancing. Surrounded by a crowd of milkmaids, he or his priest danced most complicated dances, as herdsfolk do today. Milk and milk-products, sometimes mixed with boiled rice were his offering. Pastoral life affords more opportunities than a hunter's life for indulging in the delights of love, as it also provides occasions for the temporary parting of lovers, which later only heightens the pleasure of re-union. The life of the herdsman is the jolliest of all, because, unlike the hunter or the man who sails far out into the sea whose lives are fraught with risks, he does the easy work of leisurely tending cattle in the forest. Hence the Black God of the tenders of cattle is the jolliest of the Indian Gods.

The god of the coastal region was, of course, the dread lord of the sea. The horn of the terrible shark symbolized him in the rituals of his fisherman-worshippers, who crowded on the sea coast, black men and women with children on their hips, and offered him fresh or salted fish and meat. The joys of love were not denied to the fisherfolk; for we read in the literature of a later period that noblemen of the surrounding regions were, notwithstanding the fishy smell of the well-grown limbs of these swarthy dames who embellished their persons with the lilies of the marshes, smitten with love for them, and while their menfolk were away, out on the sea, drove in their carts or chariots to the sea-side to visit their paramours....

The last of the regions was Pālai, the desert, the home of the marauder. Like the adjacent hilly tracts it was the region where the matriarchate persisted for a long period; and hence the divinity of this region was the goddess of victory (Koṟṟavai) and her devotees, the Maṟavar, men of cruel deeds, offered her bloody sacrifices—human and animal. Pālai was the bleak land, appropriately associated with the tragedy of love, that is, the long parting of the lovers, when the hero goes out in search of fortune to lay at the feet of the beloved and has to travel along sandy paths covered with the bleaching bones of the dead. Koṟṟavai was worshipped with wild drunken revelry as may well be imagined.

Four of these five gods are enumerated by Tolkāppiyanār. "The world of forests desired by Māyon (the black god), the world of hills desired by Seyon (the red god), the world of sweet waters desired by the King (of gods) and the world of wide sand desired by Varuṇan, are respectively called Mullai, Kuṟiñji, Marudam and Neydal.[1] It will be noticed that Tolkāppiyanār identifies the old Tamil gods with the corresponding Aryan ones and calls the god

[1] Tol. Por. i. 5.

of the valleys the king, because he was to the Aryans the king of Svarga and gives to the sea-god the Sanskrit name of Varuṇan. The ancient Tamil names of the two latter are not recoverable; they may have been Seṇon and Kaḍalon. Tolkāppiyanār does not name the goddess of the desert, because he omits the Pālai from the list of permanently inhabited regions.

II. The God of Youth and Beauty

The worship of Murukan obtained a very prominent place in early Tamil religion. He was worshipped under several aspects. The poem commented upon in the following reading shows a third or fourth century development of his cult. Sir P. ARUNACHALAM whose *Studies and Translations* reveal a deep and comparative understanding of Tamil literature and culture comments on the cult of Murukan in his essay, *The worship of Muruka or Skanda*, The Apothecaries Co., Colombo, 1937, pages 130 to 133.

THE TIRU-MURUK-ARRUP-PADAI IS a poem of the third Academy, and commences the anthology known as the Ten Lyrics and is in praise of god Muruka. It belongs to a class of poems known in classic Tamil as *Āṟṟup paḍai*, literally "a guiding or conducting", from *aru*, way and *paduthu*, to cause. Various kinds of this class of poem are mentioned in the *Tholkāppiyam*. A poet, musician, minstrel or dancer, on his way home with gifts from a patron would direct others to him and make it the occasion for singing his praise. Or, as in this poem, one who has received from his patron-god many precious spiritual boons tells others of his good fortune and how they too may win it.

"If, striving for the wisdom that cometh of steadfastness in righteous deeds, thou with pure heart fixed upon His feet desirest to rest there in peace, then by that sweet yearning—the fruit of ancient deed—which spurneth all things else, thou wilt here now gain thy goal" (v.v. 62-68)

This is the central idea of the poem. He is regarded as in his essence formless and beyond speech and thought, but assuming forms to suit the needs of his votaries and accepting their worship in whatever form, if only heartfelt. This is indeed the normal Hindu attitude in religious matters and accounts for its infinite tolerance. All religions are ways, short or long, to God. "The nameless, formless one we will call and worship by a thousand names in chant and dance," the Psalmist Mānikka-vāchakar cries. God, under what-

ever name or form sought, comes forward to meet the seeker and help his progress onwards through forms suitable to his development. "They who worship other gods with faith and devotion, they also worship me," it is declared in the Bhagavad Gita (IX, 21). The merit claimed for the Hindu religious system is that it provides spiritual food and help for the soul in every stage of its development; hence it is significantly called the Ladder Way (Sopāna mārga).

The God Muruka has many shrines and modes of worship. Some of them are described in this poem, which thus serves, as its name indicates, as a "Guide to the Holy Muruka". The shrines are all in Tamil land. The first shrine mentioned in Tirupparankunram, a hill about 5 miles south-west of Madura.

"He dwelleth gladly on the Hill west of the Clustered Towers—gates rid of the battle, for the foe hath been crushed and the ball and doll defiantly tied to the high flag-staff are still,—faultless marts, Lakshmi's seats, streets of palaces.

"He dwelleth on the Hill where swarms of beauteous winged bees sleep on the rough stalks of lotuses in the broad stretches of muddy fields; they blow at dawn round the honey-dripping *neithal* blooms and with the rising sun sing in the sweet flowers of the pool as they open their eyes." (v.v. 67-77)

The other shrines specifically named are "Alaivāi (wave mouth v. 125), now known as Tiruchendur, a shrine on the southern coast about 36 miles from Tinnevelly; Āvinankudi (v. 176), now known as Palanimalai (Palni Hills), about the same distance from Dindigul and a well-known hill station; Tiru-Erakam (v. 189), now called Swāmimalai, a hill about 4 miles from Kumbakonam. Each of the shrines with its appropriate incidents and associations is the subject of a little picture—making a sort of cameo or gem strung together in this poem forming a perfect whole (v.v. 1-77, 78-125, 126-176, 177-189). Three of the shrines are situated amid mountains and forests, for they are dear to Muruka. One section (v.v. 190-217) describes his "Sport on the mountains" and another (v. 218 *ad fin.*) describes him as dwelling in "Fruit-groves" and worshipped by forest tribes. The shrine of Kataragama is understood to be included in the last. The poet enumerates many other places and ways in which the god manifests himself: festivals accompanied with goat sacrifices and frenzied dancers, groves and woods, rivers and lakes, islets, road-junctions, village-meetings, the kadamba tree (eugenia racemosa), etc., and lastly wherever votaries seek him in prayer (v.v. 218-225), recalling Jesus' saying (Matth. XVIII, 20) "where two or three are assembled in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Muruka would thus appear to be a deity in whom were amalgamated many legends and traditions, many aspects of religion and modes of worship, primitive and advanced, and to embody the Hindu ideal of God immanent in all things and manifesting himself wherever sought with love.

Muruka means tender age and beauty and is often represented as the type of perennial youth, sometimes as quite a child. There is in Vaithiswaran temple near Tanjore an exquisite figure of the child-god. He is also worshipped in the form of a six-faced god, the lengendary origin of which form I have already given. Verses 90-118 describe the part played by each face and each of his twelve arms and show that this form was a personification of various divine aspects and powers.

"One face spreadeth afar rays of light, perfectly lighting the world's dense darkness; one face graciously seeketh his beloved and granteth their prayers; one face watcheth over the sacrificial rites of the peaceful ones who fail not in the way of the Scriptures; one face searcheth and pleasantly expoundeth hidden meanings, illumining every quarter like the moon; one face, with wrath mind filling, equality ceasing, wipeth away his foes and celebrateth the battle sacrifice; one face dwelleth smiling with slender waisted Vedda maid, pure-hearted Valli." He is thus worshipped as the god of wisdom by those who seek spiritual enlightenment, as the god of sacrifice and ritual by ritualists, as the god of learning by scholars, as the giver of all boons, worldly and spiritual, to his devotees. In punishing the Titans, his divine heart (according to the commentator) seemed for the moment to deviate from the feeling of equality towards all his creatures. But the punishment was really an expression of his fatherly love for his children. In the same way the wedding of Valli by the god was to set to mankind a pattern of family life and duty.

III. Saivaism

The worship of Śiva is said to be Dravidian in origin. Sir Charles Eliot whose book *Hinduism and Buddhism* is a historical survey which, though published in 1921, retains its importance even today. The author traces the development of Śaivaite religious thought in Volume I, from pages 211 to 215, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

The reader will perhaps have noticed that up to the career of Śankara we have been concerned exclusively with northern India,

and even Śankara, though a native of the south, lived much in the north and it was the traditional sacred lore of the north which he desired to establish as orthodoxy. Not only the older literature, Brahmanic as well as Buddhist, but most of the Purâṇas ignore the great stretch of Dravidian country which forms the southern portion of the peninsula and if the Râmâyaṇa sings of Râma's bridge and the conquest of Lanka this is clearly an excursion into the realms of fancy. Yet the Dravidian districts are ample in extent, their monuments are remarkable, their languages are cultivated, and Tamil literature possesses considerable interest, antiquity and originality. Unfortunately in dealing with these countries we experience in an unusually acute form the difficulties which beset every attempt to trace the history of ideas in India, namely, the absence of chronology. Before A.D. 1000 materials for a connected history are hardly accessible. There are, however, many inscriptions and a mass of literature (itself of disputable date) containing historical allusions, and from these may be put together not so much a skeleton or framework as pictures of ancient life and thought which may be arranged in a plausible order.

It may be said that where everything is so vague, it would be better to dismiss the whole subject of southern India and its religion, pending the acquisition of more certain information, and this is what many writers have done. But such wide regions, so many centuries, such important phases of literature and thought are involved, that it is better to run the risk of presenting them in false sequence than to ignore them. *Briefly it may be regarded as certain that in the early centuries of our era Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism all flourished in Dravidian lands.* The first two gradually decayed and made way for the last, although Jainism remained powerful until the tenth century. At a fairly early date there were influential Śivaite and Vishnuite sects, each with a devotional literature in the vernacular. Somewhat later this literature takes a more philosophic and ecclesiastical tinge and both sects produce a succession of teachers. Tamil Śivaism, though important for the south, has not spread much beyond its own province, but the Vishnuism associated with such eminent names as Râmânuja and Râmânand has influenced all India, and the latter teacher is the spiritual ancestor of the Kabirpanthis, Sikhs and various unorthodox sects. Political circumstances too tended to increase the importance of the south in religion, for when nearly all the north was in Moslim hands the kingdom of Vijayanagar was for more than two centuries (*c.* 1330-1565) the bulwark of Hinduism. But in filling up this outline the possibilities of error must be remembered. The poems of Manikka-Vaçagar have such individuality of thought and style that one would suppose them

to mark a conspicuous religious movement. Yet some authorities refer them to the third century and others to the eleventh, nor has any standard been formulated for distinguishing earlier and later varieties of Tamil.

I have already mentioned the view that the worship of Śiva and the Linga is Dravidian in origin and borrowed by the Aryans. There is no proof that this worship had its first home in the south and spread northwards, for the Vedic and epic literature provides a sufficient pedigree for Śiva. But this deity always collected round himself attributes and epithets which are not those of the Vedic gods but correspond with what we know of non-Aryan Indian mythology. It is possible that these un-Aryan cults attained in Dravidian lands fuller and more independent development than in the countries colonized by the Aryans, so that the portrait of Śiva, especially as drawn by Tamil writers, does retain the features of some old Dravidian deity, a deity who dances, who sports among men and bewilders them by his puzzling disguises and transformations.[1] But it is not proved that Śiva was the chief god of the early Tamils. An ancient poem, the Purra-Poruḷ Veṇbâ-Mâlai,[2] which contains hardly any allusions to him mentions as the principal objects of worship the goddess Koṭṭavai (Victorious) and her son Muruvan. Popular legends[3] clearly indicate a former struggle between the old religion and Hinduism ending as usual in the recognition by the Brahmans of the ancient gods in a slightly modified form.

We have no records whatever of the introduction of Brahmanism into southern India but it may reasonably be supposed to have made its appearance there several centuries before our era, though in what form or with what strength we cannot say. Tradition credits Agastya and Paraśu-Râma with having established colonies of Brahmans in the south at undated but remote epochs. But whatever colonization occurred was not on a large scale. An inscription found in Mysore[4] states that Mukkaṇṇa Kadamba (who probably lived in the third century A.D.) imported a number of Brahman families from the north, because he could find none in the south. Though this language may be exaggerated, it is evidence that Brahmans cannot have been numerous at that time and it is probable that Buddhism and Jainism were better represented. Three of Asoka's inscriptions have been found in Mysore and in his last edict describing

[1] The old folklore of Bengal gives a picture of Śiva, the peasant's god, which is neither Vedic nor Dravidian. See Dinesh Chandra Sen, *Bengali Lang. and Lit.*, pp. 68 ff. and 239 ff.

[2] *J.R.A.S.* 1899, p. 242.

[3] See some curious examples in Whitehead's *Village Gods of South India.*

[4] Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, pp. 27 and 204.

his missionary efforts he includes "the kings of the Pândyas and Colas in the south" among the conquests of Buddhism. Mahinda founded a monastery in the Tanjore district and probably established Buddhism at various points of the Tamil country on his way to Ceylon.[5] There is therefore no reason to be doubtful of Buddhist activity, literary or other, if evidence for it is forthcoming. Hsüan Chuang in A.D. 640 deplores the decay of Buddhism and speaks of the ruins of many old monasteries.

According to Jain tradition, which some think is supported by inscriptions at Śravana-Belgoḷa,[6] Bhadrabâhu accompanied by Candra Gupta (identified with the Maurya king of that name) led a migration of Jains from the north to Mysore about 300 B.C. The authenticity of this tradition has been much criticized but it can hardly be disputed that Jainism came to southern India about the same time as Buddhism and had there an equally vigorous and even longer existence.

Most Tamil scholars are agreed in referring the oldest Tamil literature to the first three centuries of our era and I see nothing improbable in this. We know that Asoka introduced Buddhism into south India. About the time of the Christian era there are many indications that it was a civilized country[7] which maintained commercial relations with Rome and it is reasonable to suppose that it had a literature. According to native tradition there were three successive Sanghams, or Academies, at Madura. The two earlier appear to be mythical, but the third has some historical basis although it is probable that poems belonging to several centuries have been associated with it. Among those which have been plausibly referred to the second century A.D., are the two narrative poems Śilappadhikaram and Maṇimêkhalai as well as the celebrated collection of didactic verses known as the Kural. The first two poems, especially the Manimêkhalai, are Buddhist in tone. The Kural is ethical rather than religious, it hardly mentions the deity, shows no interest in Brhamanic philosophy or ritual and extols a householder's life above an ascetic's. The Nâladiyâr is an anthology of somewhat similar Jain poems which as a collection is said to date from the eighth century, though verses in it may be older. This Jain and Buddhist literature does not appear to have attained any religious importance or to have

[5] The early Brahmi inscriptions of southern India are said to be written in a Dravidian language with an admixture not of Sanskrit but of Pali words. See *Arch. Survey India,* 1911-12, Part 1. p. 23.

[6] See Rice, *Mysore and Coorg,* pp. 3-5 and Fleet's criticisms, *I.A.* xxi. 1892, p. 287.

[7] The various notices in European classical authors as well as in the Sinhalese chronicles prove this.

been regarded as even quasi-canonical, but the Dravidian Hindus produced two large collections of sacred works, one Sivaite the other Vishnuite, which in popular esteem rival the sanctity of the Vedas. Both consist of hymns, attributed to a succession of saints and still sung in the temple worship, and in both sects the saints are followed by a series of teachers and philosophers.

IV. Elements of Philosophy

The extent to which philosophical speculation was popular among the Tamils of the early period is not known. From existing literature it is argued that they were more realistic than speculative. Swami VIPULANANDA advances this theory in an article published in the *Journal of the Annamalai University* and republished in *Tamil Culture,* Vol. V, 1959. The article is entitled "The Development of Tamilian Religious Thought". The reading is from pages 254 to 259.

THESE ANTHOLOGIES OPEN up an entirely new world, entering into which one meets with a god-like race of men and women, strong in physique, possessed of a keen intellect, proud, valiant, active and energetic. They appear to have given little or no thought to metaphysical speculations. Life in those remote times was strenuous and the hero, who won renown by steady perseverance and indomitable courage, either in the battle-field or in the more peaceful avocations of life, was held up as the ideal to be followed. He, whose valour was sung by bards here on earth, was sure of mounting the celestial car, which carried the soul in its ascent to the abode of the Immortals. This earliest epoch in the civilisation of the Tamils is the age in which Heroism was exalted to the position of a religion. The acquisition of fame was held up as the motive for virtuous action and the performance of strenuous deeds of valour.

The War-God Muruga, ruddy-complexioned, resembling the sun at dawn, was worshipped from the earliest times as the ideal of unfailing Achievement His mother, the great Goddess, whom the Tamilian soldiers invoked in the field of battle was known as Korravai, the Victorious One Even in those early days, there were philosophers, *Arivar,* who by years of mental discipline had attained intuitive insight into the past, the present and the future; and there were also anchorites, *Thapathar* who performed severe austerities; the *Arivar* and the *Thapathar* having the attainment of Truth as the sole aim of life worshipped Shiva, the unborn, the embodiment of Truth. To those who shrank from the path of Truth, the God of

Truth appeared as the God of Wrath and Destruction. Mayon, the blue-complexioned, was the embodiment of Fame.[1] His brother, Valiyon, whose complexion was as white as a conch-shell, was the personification of undisputed Strength.[2] Indra and Varuna ranked only as demi-gods.

Paripadal, one of the Sangam anthologies, makes mention of the Vedic pantheon[3] of gods, such as the twelve Adityas, the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras and the twin Asvini-devas; but the worship of these deities had not yet taken root among the mass of the people. Some of the kings were persuaded to perform Vedic sacrifices, which they did more for the purpose of winning earthly renown than for the achieving of heavenly rewards. One of the Pandya kings, Muthu-kudumi Peru Vazhuthi, who lived before the time of the submergence of the Pahruli river, had the distinguishing epithet of Pal-yaga salai, which means the possessor of many sacrificial halls and another Chola king is known as Peru-killi who performed the Rajasuya sacrifice. Early Aryan thought appears to have been introduced into Tamilakam with Vedic ritualism.

The *Tholkappiyam* and the *Paripadal* make incidental mention of the early speculations concerning the Universe, man's place in it and the ultimate destiny of humanity. The Sankhya system of philosophy was in vogue from very early times; atttention, however, does not appear to have been centred round the study of philosophy, until the coming of the Jains and Buddhists. Within a century or two after the time of their illustrious founders, these great religions appear to have been introduced into Tamilakam. Somewhere about this time, there appeared on the firmament of Tamilakam a star of the first magnitude which continues to shed its lustre even to this day. Tiruvalluvar, whose name is known to all parts of the civilized world, and whose teachings have lent a unique grandeur to the language in which they were uttered, lived in an age of great intellectual activity. The ferment, introduced by the great heresies of Jainism and Buddhism, made the exponents of Vaidika Dharma revalue the traditional teachings and to formulate a course of conduct which, while remaining within the established tenets of the ancient Dharma, would also appeal to those who would not accept the authority of the Vedas. The Universal gospel of Tiruvalluvar met this demand and has ever since been acclaimed as the Uttara Veda.

When Buddhism and Jainism were first introduced, they were considered merely as systems of thought and were received with open arms. The disciplined life of the monk and the self-sacrifice

1 *Puram,* LVI, 13.
2 *Puram,* LVI, 12.
3 *Paripadal* III, 6-8; VIII, 4-8.

shown by him may have appealed to the hardy Tamil warrior. The old soldier, who might have grown world-weary of the endless number of battles he was called upon to fight, may have found a calm refuge in the seclusion of monasteries. Those who suffered great bereavements, such as the fathers of Kovalan and Kannaki, entered the monasteries to pass the last days of their lives. Princes of the royal blood, such as Ilankoadikal, embraced a life of poverty to follow the example of the noble ascetic, the scion of the Sakya clan. Along with Buddhism and Jainism, the Nyaya and Vaiseshika philosophies were introduced into Tamilakam. In those remote times, the Mimamsa system does not appear to have been divided into the Purva and the Uttara Mimamsas. Lokayata (materialism), Buddhism, the Sankhya, the Nyaya, the Vaiseshika and the Mimamsa systems are known as the six systems of philosophy in the time of the *Manimekhalai.*[4] A great impetus was given to the cultivation of learning and some of the Tamilian Buddhist scholars went to China, Tibet and the island of Java carrying with them the torch of knowledge. Mention is made in the *Manimekhalai* of the famous Buddhist teacher, Ara-vana-adikal. The name may be translated into Sanskrit as Dharmaswarupa. He is the hero of the epic, as much as his disciple, the Bhikshuni *Manimekhalai,* is the heroine. The fact that he was extremely aged is mentioned in several places in the poem. The force of his personality appears to have gained many adherents to the path of Buddhism. Later on Buddhism and Jainism gained ground to such an extent that they gave up the spirit of toleration which characterized them at the beginning and became aggressive religions. They aimed at the conversion of the whole of Tamilakam and attempted to do this by winning over the exclusive patronage of princes and scholars. After the destruction of Pukar (Kavirippumpattinam), which event took place somewhere about the end of the second century, the Chola capital is transferred to Uraiyur. Madura suffers from a severe drought and famine for twelve years. The poets of the Sangam disperse and the glories of the good old days become a mere memory of the past. Several Northern dynasties, that cast covetous eyes upon the wealth of Tamilakam, find an opportune moment to gain a foothold in the South; an Aryan expeditionary force from the North appears to have invaded Tamilakam as early as the time of the Pandya king mentioned in the *Chilappadikaram.* This invasion was successfully resisted and the king is, therefore, known to history as Arya-padai-kadantha Neduncheliyan. Subsequently, the Aryan hordes make a clean sweep of the country and in the next century we see Pallava kings well-established in Kanchi.

[4] *Manimekhalai* XXVII.

The Chola and the Pandya dynasties suffer a temporary eclipse and the whole country passes through a period of transition, at the end of which, we find that the North had achieved a cultural conquest even more pronounced than the political conquest. The very names of the Pandya and Chola kings become Sanskritized.

It was during this time, perhaps by the end of the third century or a little earlier, that the Yoga system of philosophy began to appear in Tamilakam. Tradition says that Patanjali lived at Chidambaram and wrote his commentary on Panini's grammar, a treatise on medicine, his immortal treatise on Yoga and the Tantric rules for the worship of Nataraja. The sage is represented as a Naga and is considered as an incarnation of Sesha Naga. This seems to suggest that the theory and practice of Yoga were developed among the ancient Nagas. Patanjali's name is coupled with that of Vyagrapada, another sage, who is said to have arrived at Chidambaram earlier. This sage is represented with eyes in his toes. Is he to be identified with Akshapada, the father of Nyaya Sastra? These two sages are said to be the first to witness the cosmic dance of Nataraja. The account may be symbolic of the fact that the supreme truth of the Shaiva religion can only be discerned by the combined eyes of Yoga and Nyaya. By saying so, we do not in the least deny, the historicity of the two sages mentioned above. The Agamic cult of worship, which probably existed as a secret cult from early times, was elaborated during this period. It was certainly enriched by the influx of Tantric thought from the North. The worship of Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, whose form is that of the Pranava mantra is recognised in the Yoga system.

V. Jainism and Buddhism

Jainism and Buddhism have had a very long and important history in the Tamil country. Some of the earliest Tamil inscriptions, which belong to the pre-Christian era, are to be found in the caves in which Jain and Buddhist monks lived. Three or four of the Cankam poets may have been Jains and Buddhists, judging by their names. The *Epic of the Anklet*, as has been noted, is by a Jain, while the *Manimekalai* was composed by a Buddhist. V. Kanakasabhai in his well-known book *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago* discusses Jain and Buddhist influence on Tamil Civilization. Pages 232 and 233 of *The Tamils Eighteen hundred Years Ago*, reprinted in Madras 1956 by South India Saiva Siddhanta works Publishing Society, first published in 1904.

THE CHIEF ANTI-BRAHMANICAL religions, which were popular among the Tamils, were the Nigranta and the Bauddha. These two religions considered the rites and ceremonies of the Vedas to be useless labour, and the exclusive privileges arrogated by the Brahmins to be empty pretensions. The Nigranta system was older than Buddhism and the Nigrantas called the Buddhists *Pashandas*, or heretics. The Nigrantas worshipped Argha whom they considered to be the Supreme Intelligence which governs the Universe. His image was generally in the form of a naked man, seated or standing under an *Asoka* tree, with a triple umbrella above him.[1] They had two principal vows, not to speak an untruth and kill any living creature. They trained their minds to avoid envy, greed, anger and evil speech. Their community was divided into two sections: the sravakas (hearers) or laymen and the religious men; and of the latter there were five classes, who were called *Pancha-para-meshtin*, namely *Argha*, holy men; *siddha* those who had acquired supernatural powers; *Upadhyaya*, religious teachers; *Acharaya*, priests; and *Sadhu*, pious people. Near their temples, and in the open squares at the crossing of public roads, they erected pulpits from which their monks preached their religion. Both men and women were allowed to enter the monastery, and take vows of celibacy. Their monks and nuns carried an alms-bowl, a hoop made of twine to suspend a water-pot, and a bundle of peacock feathers with which they could sweep off insects, without injuring them, from the places where they have to sit or lie down. They repeated a short prayer of five letters, which they called the *Pancha-mantra.*[2]

Images of Buddha had not yet come into use, but the impressions of his feet engraved on stone, and the platforms built of stone representing the seat from which he preached his doctrine were objects of worship to the Buddhists.[3] The pious Buddhist walked round them, with his right side towards them, and bowed his head in token of reverence. Standing in front of them, with joined hands, he praised the Buddha as follows: "How shall I praise thee! the wise, the holy and the virtuous teacher, who excelled in the strict performance of the religious vows! Thou, who conquered Mâra who subdued anger, and all evil passions: who art supreme in knowledge, and the refuge of all mankind! Have I a thousand tongues to praise thy blessed feet, on the soles of which are a thousand auspicious lines?" In the Buddhist Vihâras or monastries, learned monks preached their sermons, seated in a place which was entirely concealed from the view

[1] Chilapp-athikaram, XI. 1 to 11.
[2] *Ibid.*, X. 15 to 25.
[3] *Ibid.*, X. 98 to 101.

of the audience.[4] One of the first virtues preached and practised by them was charity. "Those who give food give life indeed" was a common saying among them. A life of self-control and wisdom and universal charity was declared to be the highest happiness of man. Buddhist monks were very numerous in the Tamil country, as may be inferred from the statement that there were a thousand monks attached to the seven Vihâras at Kavirip-paddinam alone. The Buddhists did not observe the distinctions of caste, and invited all ranks to assemble on a footing of equality.

One of the greatest facts of ancient Tamil society was religious toleration, the spirit of free enquiry, or the liberty of the human understanding. The monarchs themselves openly encouraged religious discussion, for, they invited teachers of every sect to the public halls, and allowed them to preach their doctrines during festivals and other occasions of public gathering. They protected impartially the temples and monastries of all sects; and although they might have personally inclined to believe in the doctrines of a particular sect and built and endowed places of worship for that sect, they cautiously avoided interfering with the rites and ceremonies of rival faiths. This religious liberty had a great and salutary influence upon the intellectual and moral development of the Tamils. By softening feelings and manners, Buddhism also powerfully contributed to the amelioration of the social state. The Nigrantas and Buddhists aimed at a high ideal of morality. Justice, humanity, charity to all living beings and love of truth were the virtues which they taught by precept and example. These two religions necessarily exercised a very considerable influence upon moral and intellectual order, and upon public idea and sentiments.

VI. Superstitions

P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar in his *History of the Tamils from the Earliest Times to 600* A.D. has gathered together references to some of the superstitions in the classical period. The reading is from pages 273 to 275.

Now for a few superstitions which prevailed among the people. As now, so in those old days, the crow announced by its cries that a guest was coming to the house. "The sweet food made from the white rice grown all round Toṇḍi, mixed with the ghi given by the

[4] *Ibid.*, X. 11 to 14.

many cattle of the herdsmen living in the forests of Naḷḷi of the strong car, was placed on a plate as a small offering to the crow that announced the arrival of the lover on whose account the strong shoulders of my companion have become lean."[1] Belief in omens was rampant. The directions of the flight, and the cries of birds indicated the future success or failure of attempts. "(Poets) will blame the hour of starting and the indications of birds" when they do not get reward.[2] Demons were believed to reside in trees and, in the grave yards;[3] demonesses frequented battle-fields, dug (with their fingers) into the wounds of the fallen and combed their hair with red, bloody fingers and hence looked red.[4] "Demonesses embraced the dead and ate the white flesh. Devils possessed Pulaiya women; then they jumped about like cattle. The best way to drive it away was to burn white mustard.[5] They also "cut the throat of a goat, placed a dish of millets, sounded many musical instruments in the high road, blessed the demon along with others which have not possessed the girl, and proclaimed that the girl had been possessed by a devil."[6] The demons are fond of raw human flesh and blood; so they surround wounded warriors even when alive and once they touch the raw wound, it will refuse to heal and the man dies soon. To prevent devils from touching the wound of a man his wife, "sticks into the roof the leaves of the sweet-fruited ironwood tree (iravam) and of the margosa, gets the bent-trunked yāḷ and other musical instruments to be sounded, slowly lifts her hands and rubs (the house) with lumps of blacking, scatters mustard all over, gets flutes to be blown, bells to be rung, and the tune called Kāñji to be sung."[7]

VII. Monastic Caves

Inscriptions on the stones of caves used as dwelling places by Jain and Buddhist monks have been found in parts of the Tamil country. The language of these inscriptions are said to be a form of hybrid Tamil. The inscriptions are brief and generally record the names of the donors and donees. The following reading is a description of

[1] Kuṟ. 210.
[2] Puṟ. 204. 1. 10.
[3] Puṟ. 238. 11. 4-5.
[4] Ib. 62. 11. 2-4.
[5] Ib. 98. 1. 15
[6] Kuṟ. 263. 11. 1-5.
[7] Puṟ. 28. 1 6.

some of these caves published in 1911 by K. V. SUBRAMANYA AIYAR in his article "The origin and decline of Buddhism and Jainism in Southern India", *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XL, 1911, pages 210 to 211.

THE FIRST COUNTRY that the (Buddhist) missionaries from Ceylon could have visited is the Pâṇḍya territory with which, as we have already pointed out, the Singhalese were well acquainted and even connected by marriage ties. We shall now see if there is anything in the Pâṇḍya country to bear testimony to our view.

Since the discovery of a cavern with Brâhmî inscriptions at Marugâltalai in the Tinnevelly district by Mr. Chadwick, I have discovered several similar ones with lithic records of the 3rd century B.C., all in the Madurâ district.[1] Four of these are at a place called Ariṭṭâpaṭṭi in the Mêlûr tâluka, one on the Ânaimalai hills near the insignificant village of Nâraśingam which may be characterised as an ancient Jaina settlement; one on the hill at Tirupparangunram, behind the village *châvaḍi*, opposite the railway station; another at Alagarmalai and still another at Ammaṇâmalai, which last I was misled to believe to be Kongar-Puḷiyanguḷam where I learnt there was a Buddhist cavern and which was accordingly termed by me as such. Kongar-Puḷiyanguḷam was subsequently found to contain another similar monument, and this proves that my information was not incorrect.

More of these caverns were found, one at Mêṭṭuppaṭṭi by Rai Bahadur V. Venkayya, another at Varichchiyûr by Mr. Vibert and a third at Kîḷavaḷavu by Mr. Venkata Rao. These monuments are the oldest that the Pâṇḍya country contains, or, for the matter of that, the oldest in Southern India. For a complete description of these caverns reference may be made to Mr. Venkayya's remarks on them in the *Annual Report* on Epigraphy for 1908. As regards the position of one and all of them, Mr. Griffith's excellent note that seclusion from the world and the active business of life was obviously the first essential of the saintly life of Buddhism, as of all ascetic forms of religion, and that the originators of the caves seem to have been influenced not only in the choice of the site, but also by a keen appreciation of natural beauty, and that all the caves are superbly placed with an obvious selection of a noble outlook and perfect seclusion from the world,[2] are well applicable. That during the time of the Chinese pilgrim Fa Hian, caves were resorted to in India by

[1] They are noticed in the *Annual Reports* of the Assistant Archæological Superintendent for 1906-7, 1907-8 and 1908-9, under "Earliest Lithic Monuments of the Tamil Country."

[2] *Ajanta Paintings* by Mr. Griffith, Introduction.

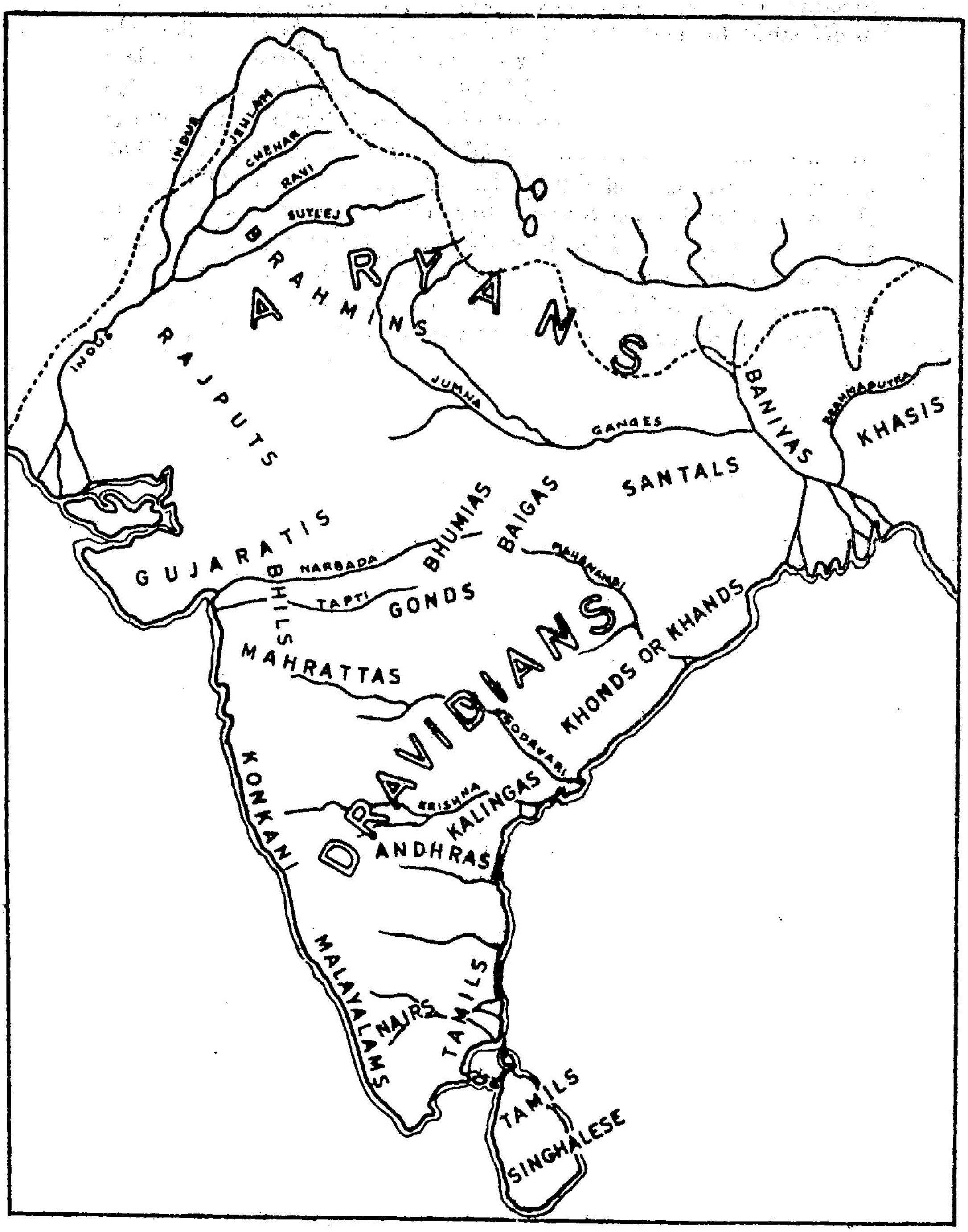
Buddhist monks is evident from his statement that "three *li* before you reach the top of Mount Gridhrakûṭa there is a cavern in the rocks facing the south in which Buddha sat in meditation; thirty paces to the north-west there is another where Ânanda was sitting in meditation when the Dêva, Mâra-Pisuna, having assumed the form of a vulture took his place in front of the cavern and frightened the disciple; going on still to the west they found the cavern called Sritapara, the place where after the *nirvâṇa* of Buddha 500 *arhats* collected the *sûtras*."[3] The Buddhist priests of later years than the time of the great founder appear to have followed the same practice, and the hands of the devotees developed the rude natural caves into habitable dwellings befitting their residents. Whether they were primarily designed as the provision for the annual "retreat" initiated by Buddha when it was ordained that the monks were to keep *vassa* and refrain from peregrination during the rains, or were intended to give a cool resort during the hot season, cannot now be easily determined. Besides being watertight, convenient for human habitation and far above any possible accident from the rains and floods of the monsoon, to this day they are agreeably cool even in the hottest weather. The doubt raised in the first part of the passage quoted here, whether the caverns were designed for the annual "retreat" or were intended to give a cool resort, can be cleared from the reply which Mâhinda gave to Tissa when the latter requested the saint to halt in the beautiful garden adjoining his capital on a certain night. The statement[4] of the *thêra* shows that the Buddhist monks were prohibited by the rules of their order to stay even in the immediate proximity of cities or villages, and it also accounts in a way for the necessity for the caverns.

In the general forms of these, viz., one boulder overhanging another, a flat one on which it rests at one extremity, in the cutting of the projecting rock to a certain depth in order to prevent the rain water from gliding into the cavern, in the existence on the bottom boulder (1) of smoothly chiselled beds with a slightly raised portion for the head, just sufficient for a man to lie down, (2) of the groove immediately in the outer fringe of the cave quite below the cutting on the upper rock for carrying away the drippling of the rain water to a distance, (3) of big holes cut on the open yard intended perhaps for fixing poles or railings, and (4) of a number of smaller holes for other works of protection—in all these details the caverns of the Pâṇḍya country resemble those in Ceylon, which are assuredly Buddhistic in their character. As Ariṭṭa and his followers,

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Mahâvaṁsa*, Wijesinha's translation, p. 54.

together with Mâhinda and several others, are reported in the *Mahâvaṁśa* to have gone abroad to propagate the Bauddha religion, and as several caverns are found in the vicinity of a place called Ariṭṭâpatti (the village of Ariṭṭa), it might be presumed that this place was the first settlement of the Singhalese apostle Ariṭṭa of the 3rd century B.C. Whatever might have been the origin of Buddhism in other parts of the Dekkan, it was in all probability introduced into the Pâṇḍya territory from Ceylon, mostly after the 18th year of the reign of Aśôka. It is also likely that even in earlier times Buddhist influence was left in the Pâṇḍya country, as its people appear to have had frequent communication and even marriage connection with the early colonisers of Ceylon in the 5th century B.C.


ARYANS
BRAHMINS
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KHASIS
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BHUMIAS
GUJARATIS
NARBADA
BHILS
TAPTI
GONDS
MAHANADI
DRAVIDIANS
MAHRATTAS
KHONDS OR KHANDS
GODAVARI
KONKANI
KRISHNA
KALINGAS
ANDHRAS
MALAYALAMS
TAMILS
NAIRS
TAMILS
TAMILS
SINGHALESE

Chapter Eight

DRAVIDIANS AND ARYANS

I. Dravidian Traditions in India

In the composition of Indian Culture, some authorities ascribe a preponderant share to Dravidian Culture. One of those who has written extensively on this subject is the late Father H. HERAS, S.J. of St. Xavier's College, Bombay. This reading is from his book *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture,* Vol. I, Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, Bombay, 1953 in which he cites several authorities in support of his views. In his book, Professor Heras has also attempted to read the Indus Valley seals. He reads them as a Proto-Dravidian language, a proto form of Tamil. The following reading is taken from pages 6 to 13, and 20 to 21 of his book.

MR. HEWITT REALIZED long ago that the culture of the Dravidians before the Aryan invasions, had developed extraordinarily in all branches of human activity. "The chief opponents of Aryan progress," says he, "were the Dravidian races, who had covered the country with a network of strongly centralized and well established governments."[1] And he continues elsewhere: "There is ample evidence to show that it was not the Aryans who made India a great exporting country."[2] "The Kolarian and Dravidian settlers," he adds, "had founded and maintained a flourishing inland and foreign trade long before the advent of the Aryans, and this trade could only have been begun and kept up by a people who had made great advances in civilization."[3]

The *Bāveru Jātaka* has undoubtedly kept the tradition of one of

[1] Hewitt, *JRAS.*, 1889, p. 188.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 199.
[3] *Ibid.*

the earliest commercial expeditions that went abroad from the shores of India, when they successfully sold to the bewildered natives of Mesopotamia one crow and one peacock for a hundred pieces of silver and gold respectively.[4] The Dravidian origin of a number of words corresponding to articles of export clearly shows that they were exported by Dravidian merchants. "Apart from the existence of teak in the ruins of Mugheir Ur," says Prof. Sayce, "an ancient Babylonian list of clothing mentions *sindhu* or "muslin," the *śadin* of the Old Testament, the *sindon* of the Greeks."[5] Similarly the Tamil *arisi*, "rice" had become the Greek *orydsa*, mentioned by Theophrastus and Arrian.[6] Monkeys are also mentioned in the Bible as *kophim*, a word which is akin to the Egyptian *gofe* and to the Greek *kebos* or *kepos*. The Egyptian word was by some supposed to come from the Sanskrit *kapi*, though others refuse to accept this derivation owing to the fact that the Egyptian word is older than the Sanskrit. It is now acknowledged however that the Sanskrit word comes from the Dravidian *kapi*, which is much older.[7] No other is the origin of the biblical *tukkim*, "peacocks," which may be connected with the Greek *taos*, "peacock," both deriving from the Dravidian *toka* or *tokai*.[8] It is also admitted that the Egyptian *eb*, "elephant," and the Greek *el-ephas* come from the Dravidian *ipa*.[9]

Further, the system of local administration now prevalent in the country is considered to be of Dravidian origin. Hewitt speaks of the six groups of five men who were ruling the cities, also mentioned by Strabo[10] and in the *Mahābhārata*,[11] whose remnants are still found in the modern Pañchāyats, as of Dravidian origin.[12] Such also is the wonderful institution of the village communities.[13]

In general, "the culture of India," says Hall, "is pre-Aryan in

[4] *The Jātaka* (Trans.), III, pp. 83-84. It is possible that this is a traditional record of the *first* expedition of the Proto-Indians to Mesopotamia. The fact that they had taken a crow with them may suggest that they were going to unknown seas. *Cf. Heras*, "'The Crow' of Noe", *Catholic Biblical Quartely*, X, pp. 131-139.

[5] Sayce, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion*, pp. 137-138.

[6] Hewitt, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

[7] Hagen, *Lexicon Biblicum*, III, word "*simiæ*."

[8] *Ibid.*, *word* "pavus."

[9] *Ibid.*, II, word "*elephantus*"; *Gnana Prakasar, Etymological & Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language*, word "*ipam*."

[10] Strabo, XV, 51. Cf. McCrindle, *Ancient India*, p. 54.

[11] *Mahābhārata*, Sabhā Parva, 135-263.

[12] Hewitt. *op. cit.*, p. 202. Of. Altekar, *A History of Village Communities in Western India* p. 134; Heras, "Two Proto-Indian Inscriptions from Chañhu-Daro", p. 318; Kosambi, "The village Community in the 'Old Conquests of Goa'", *Journal of the University of Bombay*, XV, pp. 63-74.

[13] Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

origin : as in Greece, the conquered civilized the conquerors. The Aryan Indian owed his civilization and his degeneration to the Dravidians, as the Aryan Greek did to the Mycenaeans."[14] Dr. Heimann also acknowledges that once the period of invasion was over "the Aryas consolidated their own imported culture with that of the Dravidians who had preceded them, and together with whom they had to live within the comparatively isolated Indian continent. It may have been the Dravidians who, as already closely adapted to the *force majeure* of India's climatic conditions, assumed the lead in this composite Aryan-Dravidian culture."[15] Similarly Profs. Seiber and Mueller remark: "Much of the original culture content of the earlier inhabitants prevail to this day, because no strong Aryan state ever encompassed the whole territory of the Indian peninsula."[16] That is the reason why Mr Donald A. Mackenzie says: "As the 'miracle of Greece' no longer obtains in consequence of the revelations of the archaeologists in Greece and elsewhere in the Near East, so there is in India no longer an 'Aryan miracle'."[17] The fact that the Aryan tribes which invaded India were not very numerous may have contributed to this strange phenomenon. "When the Indo-Aryans had conquered and colonized the basin of the Indus and its tributaries and that of the Ganges as far as Banaras, the Asuras surrounded them on all sides. They were certainly in possession of Magadha or South Bihar and modern Rājputānā at the time of the tribal war between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kurus. These Asuras were great builders, and their building operations were regarded with awe and reverence by the Aryans. In Vedic literature mention is made of the castles of the Dāsas built of stone. Cities belonging to the Asuras are called Pātala, Sanbha, Prāgjyotiṣṣa, Hiraṇyapura and Takṣasila. In the eastern countries Girivraja, the capital of the Asura chief Jarāsandha, and its defences excited the admiration of the Pāṇḍava chief Bhīma. When Yudhiṣthira, the eldest of the Pāṇḍavas, performed the Rājasuya ceremony, the Asura architect Maya was called to design and build the buildings required for the sacrifice."[18]

The *Brāhmaṇas* seem to give the reason of this superiority of the Dravidians over the Aryas in point of civilization, which of course is a product of the intellectual activity of a nation. In the *Brāhmaṇas* it is said that dark-skinned Brāhmaṇs are cleverer than white-skinned ones.[19] These dark-skinned Brāhmaṇs cannot be Brāhmaṇs by

14 Hall, *The Ancient History of the Near East*, p. 174, note 3.
15 Heimann, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.
16 Sieber-Mueller, *The Social Life of Primitive Man*, p. 406.
17 In the Foreword to Banerji, *Prehistoric, Ancient and Hindu India*, p. VII.
18 Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
19 Referred to by Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, p. 7.

penance and knowledge of the Veda, according to the classification of Patañjali.[20] They were non-Aryan Brāhmaṇs, considered to be abler than the Aryan ones. That was finally the reason why Dravidian civilization exercised such a great influence upon the whole Aryan nation from the very beginning of their stay in India. "The Vedic religion," says Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, "absorbed, embodied and preserved the types and rituals of other cults. Instead of destroying them, it adapted them to its own requirements. It took so much from the social life of the Dravidians and other native inhabitants of India that it is very difficult to disentangle the original Aryan elements from the others."[21] This may explain the great difference between the high philosophical conception of the first and tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda* (*Vāk, Hiraṇyagarbha, Puruṣa,* Creation, etc.), which are now acknowledged as the last compiled *maṇḍalas,* and the primitive materialistic conceptions prevalent in the others, though some foreign influence is already discovered even in the latter.

Dravidian influence on the later philosophico-religious books is now easily acknowledged by all independent scholars. Says Dawson : "This search for the Absolute found its earliest and most complete expression in India, where it developed not as might have been expected, from the comparatively advanced ethical ideas connected with the worship of Varuṇa, but from the more primitive type of religion which is represented by the ritual magic of the *Brāhmaṇas* and which perhaps owes its origin to the native tradition of the conquered Dravidian culture."[22] "To the orthodox Aryans," says Prof. Brown, "the doctrines of the *Upaniṣads* are the New Thought of their time; the kings and sages at the courts, where these doctrines are newly preached, hear them with wonder and amazement. Yet the doctrines are, in spite of their newness, apparently the result of a long period of elaboration, and new only to the Aryan court. One may venture the opinion, that these doctrines represent the highest phase of the ancient religion and philosophy of the Dravidians, interpreted by the Aryans who strove to be faithful to their hereditary cult, but who at best could produce only a syncretism in which the essentially non-Aryan predominated."[23]

[20] Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini, V, 1, 115.

[21] Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought,* p. 308. Dravidian influence in Vedic civilization is likewise readily admitted by Mons. Silvain Lévi (*Journal Asiatique,* CCIII. pp. 1-15) and Dr. Berriedale Keith (*The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanisads,* I, p. 269).

[22] Dawson, *Progress and Religion,* p. 127.

[23] Brown, "The Sources of Indian Philosophical Ideas", in *Studies in Honor of Maurice Bloomfield,* pp. 82-83. Cf. Heras, "The origin of Indian Philosophy and Asceticism", in Karmarkar-Kalandani, *Mystic Teachings of the Haridāsas of Karnātak,* pp. XXXVII-XL.

Similarly says Dr Berriedale Keith : "The Religion of the *Ṛgveda* is therefore the product of Aryas, who must have been affected considerably by their new environment and whose blood must have been becoming more and more intermingled by intermarriage."[24] Side by side with this religious influence of the Dravidians, all other cultural elements were little by little being introduced among the Aryas. "To give a brief résumé," says Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, "the ideas of *karma* and transmigration, the practice of yoga, the religious and philosophical ideas centering round the conception of the divinity as Śiva and Devī and as Viṣṇu, the Hindu ritual of *pūjā* as opposed to the Vedic ritual of *homa,*—all these and much more in Hindu religion and thought would appear to be non-Aryan in origin; a great deal of Purāṇic and Epic myth, legend and semi-history is pre-Aryan; much of our material culture and social and other usages—e.g., the cultivation of some of our most important plants like rice, and some vegetables and fruits like the tamarind and the cocoanut, etc., the use of the betel-leaf in Hindu life and Hindu ritual, most of our popular religion, most of our folk crafts, our nautical crafts, our distinctive Hindu dress (the *dhotī* and the *sāri*), our marriage ritual in some parts of India with the use of the vermilion and turmeric—and many other things—could appear to be a legacy from our pre-Aryan ancestors."[25]

The Dravidian influence in the field of Sanskrit literature (we do not speak here of Sanskrit language) is every day clearer. We are of opinion that many passages at least which we now read in Sanskrit works from Vedic literature down to Purāṇic works, are mere translations from ancient Dravidian works now lost. I expresed this view concerning the story of the Pāṇḍavas as found in the *Mahābhārata,* in an article contributed to the *Journal of Indian History,* Madras.[26] A few days after the publication of this article, unexpectedly I received a letter from the late Dr. V. S. Sukthankar, in which that great scholar wrote:

"You are very likely right in saying that the story of Yudhiṣṭhira and enthronement dates from a period prior to the *Ṛgveda* and to

[24] Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads,* I, p. 12. The low state of culture of the Aryas before their invasion into India might have contributed a great deal to the final acceptance of an easy amalgamation with the culture of the Dravidians. It has been suggested long ago that "prior to their migration into India, the Aryas of that era were probably of a somewhat similar stage of culture to the Todas." Marshall, *A Phrenologist among the Todas* p. 126.

[25] Chatterji, *op. cit.,* pp. 31-32.

[26] Cf. Heras, "Were the Mohenjo-Darians Aryans or Dravidians?" *J.I.H.,* XXI, p. 32.

the Aryan invasion. It is a story that has been adapted from pre-Aryan sources." [27]

Dr. Berriedale Keith had already anticipated this view seventeen years before: "Whatever amount of Dravidian influence is to be traced in the religion of the Vedic texts, it is certain that the epic already cannot be regarded as representing pure Aryan religion and that indeed Dravidian influence may have been of great importance." [28] Prof. Ojha, after studying the Indra-Vṛtra myth of the *Ṛgveda* in comparison with its parallels in other civilizations, does not hesitate in affirming: "It seems very probable that the origin of this myth is pre-Aryan, and thus the greatest of the Vedic myths is, most probably, pre-Aryan." [29] From a totally different point of view Prof. Sten Konow concludes that the Vedic god Indra is "not an Aryan, pre-Indian deity." [30] Hence we are not allowed any more to question "the predominance of the pre-Aryan element in the cultural structure of what we call 'Hinduism.'" [31]

II

This borrowing of Dravidian culture by the Aryas, which proves the mythical character of the Aryanization of India, was doubtlessly fostered by the free mixture of both the races.[32] "The Indo-Aryans," says Prof. Rakhal Das Banerji, "came to India in very small numbers, and they did not make any attempt at preserving the purity of their stock. From the very beginning they admitted tribes of foreign or mixed origin into their communities and the statements of the present-day Brahmanical writers about the racial purity of the Indo-Aryans and the rigidity of their marriage regulations are inaccurate." [33] Thus, Purukutsa, of Ṛgvedic fame, was not a pure Aryan, but connected with the Dravidians.[34] Vyāsa, the supposed author of the *Mahābhārata*, was the son of a Mātsya (Mīna) princess, of an undoubtedly Dravidian family.[35] The Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa are said

[27] Letter dated Poona, November 22nd, 1942, two months before Dr Sukthankar's death (Archives of the Indian Historical Research Institute), Cf. Heras, "The Age of the Mahābhārata War", *J.I.H.*, XXV (1948), pp. 1-20.

[28] Keith, *op. cit.*, I. p. 54.

[29] Ojha, "The Indra-Vṛtra War and the 'Serpent People'", *J.B.O.R.S.*, XXVIII, p. 59.

[30] Konow, *The Aryan Gods of the Mitani People*, p. 37.

[31] Ehrenfels, *Mother-right in India*, p. 1.

[32] "The task of organizing and Aryanizing so vast a mass of Dravidians along wholly Aryan lines would have been immense; it is difficult to conceive how it could have been accomplished." Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[33] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[34] Hewitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

[35] *Mahābhārata*, Ādi Parva, 4222-4273.

to be descendants of a Nāga king called Ariaka.[36] Yudhiṣṭhira himself says to the Nāga Nahuṣa: "In human society it is difficult to ascertain one's caste because of the promiscuous intercourse among the four orders. Men belonging to all the orders have children by women of all the orders." [37]

Considering that these unions were in vogue from very early days and taking into account the fact that the ethnical Aryan type—that is the brachycephalic—has practically disappeared from northern India,[38] modern scholars do not favour the opinion of the present existence of the Aryan race in India. "As time went on," says Keith, "Dravidian blood came more and more to prevail over Aryan." [39] Consequently Dr. Hall, of the British Museum, states: "Among the modern Indians, as amongst the modern Greeks or Italians, the ancient pre-Aryan type of the land has (as the primitive type of the land always does) survived, while that of the Aryan conqueror died out long ago." [40]

On this account we have often expressed the view that the Punjabis and Kashmiris are probably much purer Dravidians, racially considered, than the Tamil and Malayalam speaking people of South India, whose physical characteristics reveal much mixture of negrito blood in the former and of Chinese blood in the latter.[41] The Aryas never reached the mountains of Kashmir nor settled in the Puñjāb on their way to *Madhyadeśa.* When Alexander the Great invaded India, Dravidian tribes were still peacefully living along the Indus. The purest representatives of the Dravidian race in South India are probably the Coorgies, well built and sturdy people, not very different from the Punjabi type; living in the mountains they had no occasion to mix with peoples of other races. In the very traditions of South India the Coorgies are said to be imbued with "the essence (or spirit) of the Pāṇḍus." [42] They probably are the ancient Kuḍagas (later Kuraṅgas and Vānaras) spoken of in one of the Mohenjo-Daro inscriptions.[43] Their language is still called Kuḍagu. . . .

The actual affinities between the culture of India and the culture

[36] *Ibid.*, 4964-5033.

[37] *Ibid.*, Vana Parva, 14514-14628.

[38] Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal,* I, p. XL. Cf. below. Chapter V.

[39] Keith, *op. cit.*, II, p. 497.

[40] Hall, *The Ancient History of the Near East,* p. 173.

[41] The numerous Chinese merchants who from very ancient times had frequented the harbours of Malabār may perhaps explain this Chinese ethnological influence. Ibn Batuta speaks of numerous Chinese junks seen by him in the ports of that country. Cf. Lee, *The Travels of Ibn Batuta,* pp. 172-173. Chinese influence is also seen in Malabar architecture.

[42] Cole, "Cromlechs in Maisur", *I.A.*, II, p. 88.

[43] Heras, "Karnātaka and Mohenjo-Daro", p. 3.

of other nations of the west were soon found out by other authors. "It seems," says Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, "that there were Chaldaean (Sumerian as well as Semitic) and Western Asiatic, and possibly also Aegean elements in the oldest stratum of Indian Aryo-Dravidian Culture. These Western elements might have been pre-Aryan, having been already present in Proto-Dravidian, before the advent of the Aryas into India."[44] Not long after, even ethnological affinities between the Dravidians and the Mediterraneans were also pointed out. "The race or races," says Prof. Ojha, "seem to have spread from the Mediterranean coasts, along the sea coast and river deltas right up to the Indian coasts and plains and even perhaps onwards."[45] At about the same time Fr. Allo, O.P., qualifies the Dravidians as "a race which shows many somatic relations with the Mediterraneans, their pigmentation having turned black, only owing to the climate or to their mixing with the aboriginal peoples of the country."[46] It was consequently supposed that the so-called Dravidians of South India were the same Mediterraneans of the heliolithic culture of South Europe, settled in India and here mixed with the pre-Dravidian population.[47]

Further studies in the comparative history of early cultures have shown the possibility of a migration in the opposite direction, *viz.*, that the Dravidians did not travel from South Europe to India,[48] but from India to South Europe. Their seafaring activities for purposes of trade, from very ancient times add probability to this possibility. "Long before our era," acknowledges Mons. Courtillier, "the Dravidians enjoyed a culture of their own, and their commercial relations with the West, Mesopotamia and Egypt, which had begun in very early days, continued down to the disruption of the last forces of the Roman Empire."[49]

It was therefore not strange that scholars finally realised and definitely acknowledged the immediate first-rate role that India has played in spreading civilization through the South European nations of the ancient world. "It has been established beyond a possibility of doubt," says Prof. Frankfort, "that India played a part in that early complex culture which shaped the civilized world before the

[44] Chatterji, *The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language*, I, p. 27.

[45] Ojha, "The Indra-Vṛtra War and the 'Serpent People'", *J.B.O.R.S.*, XXVIII, p. 63.

[46] Allo, "Religions de l'Inde" in Brilliant Sedoncelle, *Apologétique*, p. 897.

[47] Cf. Slater, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*, pp.35-41; Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, II. p. 630. Keith nevertheless does not agree with this view.

[48] Cf. Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[49] Courtillier, *Les anciennes civilizations de l' Inde*, pp. 111-112.

advent of the Greeks."[50] In the same way Dr. Hall states: "There is little doubt that India must have been one of the earliest centres of human civilization, and it seems natural to suppose that the strange un-Semitic, un-Aryan people who came from the east to civilize the west were of Indian origin, especially when we see with our eyes how very Indian the Sumerians were in type."[51]

We are therefore forced to acknowledge that the Dravidians, of India, after a long period of development in this country, travelled westwards, and settling successively in the various lands, they found their way from Mesopotamia up to the British Isles, spread their race—afterwards named Mediterranean owing to the place where they were known anthropologically—through the west and made their civilization flourish in two continents, being thus the originators of the modern world civilization.

II. Dravidians and Aryans

In the introductory pages of his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art,* Edward Goldston, London, 1927, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, discusses the substratum of Dravidian and Aryan, particularly with regard to later developments in literature and art. The reading is from pages 5 to 7. The title of this reading is the title given by the author to the section of his book.

Certainly before the second millennium B.C. the Dravidians, whether of western origin, or as seems quite probable, of direct neolithic descent on Indian soil, had come to form the bulk of a population thinly scattered throughout India. These Dravidians should be the Dāsas or Dasyus with whom the conquering Aryans waged their wars; their *purs* or towns, are mentioned in the Vedas, and they are described as *anāsaḥ,* noseless, a clear indication of their racial type.

Amongst the elements of Dravidian origin are probably the cults of the phallus[1] and of mother-goddesses, Nāgas, Yakṣas and other nature spirits; and many of the arts. Indeed, if we recognize in the Dravidians a southern race, and in the Āryans a northern, it may well be argued that the victory of kingly over tribal organisations,

[50] Frankfort, "The Indus Civilization and the Near East", *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology VII,* p. 12.

[51] Hall, *op. cit.,* p. 174.

[1] Worshippers of the *śiśna* are mentioned with disapproval in the Vedas. A prehistoric *lingam* is illustrated by Foote, 2, pl. XV. An object resembling a *lingam* has been found at Mohenjo-Daro.

the gradual reception into orthodox religion of the phallus cult and mother-goddesses, and the shift from abstract symbolism to anthropomorphic iconography in the period of theistic and *bhakti* development, mark a final victory of the conquered over the conquerors. In particular, the popular, Dravidian element, must have played the major part in all that concerns the development and office of image-worship, that is, of *pūjā* as distinct from *yajña*.[2]

To the Dravidians are probably due the forms of architecture based on bamboo construction; the architecture of the Toda hut has been cited as a prototype, or at any rate a near analogue, of the early barrel-vaulted *caitya*-hall and the horse-shoe arch.[3] Curved roofs, common in India, are rare in the rest of the world. The stone slab construction of many early temples is likewise of Dravidian (dolmen) origin. Early maritime trade and all that has to do with fishing must be Dravidian. The chank or conch industry is a case in point; the use of chank bangles, and of the conch as a trumpet in ritual and war must have been borrowed from Dravidian sources before the epic period.[4]

The early history of the Dravidians in the Dekkhan and Southern India is obscure. It is fairly evident that in these areas Dravidian culture had already attained a high level, economic, martial, and literary, in centuries preceding the Christian era. Already in the third century B.C. the great Āndhra empire stretched across the Dekkhan from east to west.[5] In the far south a powerful and prosperous Pāṇḍyan kingdom flourished before the beginning of the Christian era, with a capital at Korkai. The first three centuries of the Christian era represent an Augustan period in the history of Tamil culture, and there is sufficient literary evidence for a high state of development of poetry, music drama, sculpture and painting. At the same time there had grown up a flourishing trade with Rome on the one hand, and with Farther India and Indonesia on the other, the principal articles of export being pepper, cinnamon, pearls and beryl.[6]

A brief reference must be made to the prehistoric Indian antiquities which cannot be exactly placed or dated. Eoliths have been found in India and Ceylon, and paleoliths are widely distributed. Remains

[2] For the theory of northern and southern races see Strzygowski, *Altai-Iran*, etc. In India, Marshall, II; and Kramrisch, pp. 79-87.

[3] Simpson, 3. But I cannot regard the "Indo-Āryan" *śikhara* as directly derived from a primitive type of bamboo construction: it is a later development, produced by the reduplication of vertically compressed storeys.

[4] Hornell, I.

[5] Smith, 4, p. 217; Jouveau-Dubreuil, 6; Bhandarkar, Sir R. G., *Early History of the Dekkhan*.

[6] Smith, 4, Ch. XVI: Aiyangar, M. D., *Tamil Studies*, Madras, 1914; Kanakasabhai.

of the Neolithic cultures, some of incalculable age, others later than the beginning of the Christian era, include the usual types of stone weapons, pottery, and dolmens. In northern India a copper age succeeded and in part overlapped (Mohenjo-Daro, etc.) the neolithic. Finds of copper weapons have been made in many places, the most important being that at Gungeria, C.P., where silver ornaments were also found. The weapons include bare and shouldered celts, plain and barbed spearheads, swords and harpoons, often in handsome shapes and finely wrought; some are of great weight and may have been used for cult purposes. There is no bronze age, nor does bronze begin to appear much before the first century A.D. Iron may have come into use in the earlier part of the first millennium B.C., or may have been known to the Āryans still earlier; the facts that there is no copper age in the south, that then is a continuity of stone and iron using cultures, that the technique of chank working requires a thin iron saw, and that iron weapons (of uncertain age) are characteristic of prehistoric sites in the south, that iron ore is abundant and readily worked, and that steel was known already in India and Ceylon in the second century B.C.,[7] all suggest that iron and steel may have come into use at an early date and may have been discovered in India. Against this view are the facts that iron is not mentioned in the early Vedic literature, and that the Hittites were using iron already about 1500 B.C. According to Sayce the Khalybes, who were neighbours of the Hittites, and perhaps of the same race, had the reputation of being the discoverers of steel; in any case, they were its transmitters to the Greeks.[8] The existence in India of Muṇḍā languages, of Mon-Khmer affinity, seems to show that the southward migration of Sino-Tibetan races which peopled the Irawadi, Menam and Mekong valleys and the Indonesian islands had also entered India at some very early period. A pre-Dravidian element in Southern India is probably Negrito or proto-Malay, and Hornell finds a trace of this first connection of India with the east in the single outrigger boat. Sylvain Lévi recognizes survivals of a pre-Dravidian language in the occurrence of doublet place-names.[9]

[7] Hornell, I.

[8] For the prehistoric remains see Foote, 1, 2; Bloomfield; Smith, V. A. in *Imperial Gazetteer*. Vol. II; and references in C. H. I., pp. 692, 693. Most of the literature on the stone age in Ceylon will be found in Spolia Zeylanica (Colombo). For the literature on iron see p. 34, note 4. The making of steel in small ingots by a true "Bessemer" process has survived in Southern India and Ceylon into the present century. If the early Vedic *ayas* refers to iron we might suppose that the use of iron weapons enabled the invaders to overcome the indigenous copper-using Dasyus.

[9] Hornell, 2 (the introduction of the coconut, of Pacific origin, and of the double-outrigger boat, due probably to the seafaring Malays wno colonised.

III. *Affinities with Mediterranean Cults*

J. H. HUDSON in his book on *Caste in India*, Oxford University Press, 1961, in an Appendix on *Hinduism and Primitive Religions* points out some of the religious beliefs and practices which show affinities with the Mediterranean region, e.g. fertility cults, phallic symbolism, the institution of hierodules, the snake cult, the cult of the bull concerning which sport there are references in the *Kalittokai* Anthology. The following readings are taken from pages 152 to 154, and 224 to 226 and 229 to 230 (extracts).

SOME OF THE features of south Indian culture suggest not merely Asia Minor (e.g. the fire-walking ceremonies such as are common in southern India and formed a feature of the worship of Artemis in Cappadocia), but Crete. Here there was a cult of snakes,[1] which, indeed, were vehicles of the soul throughout Greece, and worship of the mother goddess; here again the vogue of slender waists for males is very suggestive of medieval Indian sculpture. The popular sport among the Kallan and Maravan[2] of jumping on to enraged bulls with sharpened horns to pluck off a cloth put there for the purpose and prove themselves men in the eyes of their womenfolk is also most reminiscent not only of the bull-baiting of Provence, where a rosette must be snatched from the points of the horns of an infuriated bull, but likewise of the bull-jumping scenes on Cretan vases, though in southern India the practice does not extend to somersaults nor to the fairer sex. Terracotta figurines of the mother goddess have been excavated in Crete not dissimilar, it seems, to those from Mohenjo-Daro, and to others excavated in 1926-27 at Buxar in Bihar from a site 52 feet below the present surface and 13 feet below the Maurya stratum,[3] which rather suggest the extension of the Indus

Madagascar, are referable to the later period of maritime expansion, about the beginning of the Christian era); Lévi, 3, pp. 55-57.

[1] The cult of snakes is also strong in the lower Himalayas and is found there in the significant company of Naina Devi, megalithic monuments, and marriage customs not unsuggestive of Babylon, and of fertility rites which are spoken of by Rose in *Punjab Castes and Tribes* as 'Paphian' but which are not described. Devi in the hills is often spoken of as Devi Mai or Devi Mata—the Mother Goddess.

[2] In the case of the Kallan it is to be noticed that they include a boomerang among their wedding gifts, practise circumcision, and bury their dead and perform their Karuppan worship with the face to the north, probably indicating migration into India by land. The rite of circumcision is paid for by the boy's father's sister, mother of his potential wife.

[3] Banerji-Sastri, 'Mother-Goddess cult in Magadha' in *The Searchlight* (aniversary number, 1929).

valley culture to the Ganges valley. The cult of the bull is common to the early cultures of Crete, of Egypt, of the Near East, of the Indus valley and of Hindu India, and it may here be pointed out that Przyluski[4] suggests a non-Indo-European origin for the name of the god Vishnu and a Dravidian origin for the god himself.

The culture of the early civilization of northern India may perhaps be most conveniently described as pre-Rigvedic Hinduism. Even if this culture disappeared entirely from the Indus valley, it may well have survived across the Jumna with sufficient vigour to react to the Rig-vedic Aryans whose religious beliefs it ultimately submerged in its own philosophy. Slater[5] has aptly pointed out that Krishna himself was of Naga descent, and the traditional blue colour in which Hindu art depicts him possibly represents the brunette colouring of the indigenes as distinguished on the one hand from the blond Aryans and on the other from the dusky aboriginals. Slater again points out that Sakra, the chief priest of the Asuras, is stated by the Mahabharata to have become 'the spiritual guide of both the Daityas and the Devas', thus recording the success of the pre-Rigvedic priestly class in imposing their spiritual authority on the Aryans also, and this same Sakra, or another one, according to the Vishnu Purana, said *mantras* for the success of the Asuras and restored to life the Danavas slain by Indra. His father was the *rishi* Bhrigu whose sons were Brahmans and priests of the Daityas. Clearly there were Brahmans before the Rigvedic Aryans, and we must look for the origin of that caste partly no doubt in the priests of the presumably Dravidian-speaking civilization who may well have shared the mathematical and astronomical knowledge of contemporary Babylonia.

It seems generally to happen that people with a matrilineal system substitute a patrilineal one where the two systems come into contact, and it is likely that the change from a matrilineal to a patrilineal system started to take place in upper India as a result of immigration, while it is not unlikely that the same process tended to substitute the worship of male for female deities. The practice of Hinduizing the female village deities of southern India by providing them with orthodox male husbands from the official Hindu pantheon is still perhaps going on. In Madura the fish-eyed goddess Minakshi is annually so married with great pomp and *éclat*, but in the villages the goddess is still the real deity, and protectress of the people, rather than the recognized Hindu gods. So also in Bengal the *Dharma-puja-paddhati* records that Adyā the mother of the gods was married to Shiva with 'traditional ceremonies not enjoined in the Shas-

[4] *Archiv Orientální*, IV, 2 August 1932, *vide Indian Antiquary*, January 1933.

[5] *Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*, pp. 55 sqq.

tras but somehow or other accepted as inviolable by them and known as stri-āchāra (lit. female custom)' performed by women before the Brahmans officiated,[6] and the same author maintains elsewhere that goddesses have been accorded (in folk-custom presumably) a higher position than the gods. According to the Mahabharata a matrilineal system survived in medieval India in the kingdom of Mahishmati about the Narbadā river, where the women had liberty to choose a plurality of husbands, and among the Arattas, somewhere apparently in the Punjab, 'whose heirs are their sisters' children, not their own'. With the exception of the Nambudris, who follow the Rigveda, Brahmans in southern India, many of whom at any rate follow the Samaveda, Yajurveda or Atharvaveda, are accustomed to marry the daughter of their mother's brother. This is opposed to the letter and spirit of the Brahmanic code and is clearly suggestive of a survival of a matrilineal system; orthodoxy would appear to enjoin the patrilineal prohibition of such marriages. The Pandyan dynasty seems to have been originally matrilineal, as Tamil poems are said to allude to its founder as a woman, and the tradition recorded by Megasthenes[7] is that it was founded by a daughter of Heracles, while Pliny describes the people as '*gens Pandae, sola Indorum regnata foeminis*'.[8]

The generally accepted view of the Hindu religion, or society, used to regard it as originating in Aryan invaders of about 1500 B.C. who came in with a higher civilization and a fairer skin to find the great peninsula inhabited by dark-skinned barbarians on whom they imposed the religion of the vedas. This view can no longer be maintained, and the doubts cast on it appear to be confirmed by discoveries including that of a figure of Shiva among the remains at Mohenjodaro, while Sir John Marshall has clearly shown that the pre-Aryan religion of the Indus Valley involved a cult of the bull, and of the snake—typical Mediterranean cults, to be found in Crete—and also of phallic symbols, including 'ring' and baetylic stones, which are probably all part of the soul-fertility cult which is associated throughout India with menhirs, dolmens, and a megalithic culture generally; indeed, Heine-Geldern connects the megalithic Mycenean theatre with India and so with the Far East and the Pacific Islands. It has been pointed out with some aptness that in modern Hinduism only those elements of vedic rites have survived which are essentially social, such as the marriage ceremonies; the argument being

[6] Sarkar, *Folk Element in Hindu Culture*, p. 231.

[7] McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 37, 206, and Pintian's note on Pliny, VII, ii, in the edition of 1669, Vol. I, pp. 402, 403.

[8] *Nat. Hist.*, VI, XX,

that though society was or aimed at being Aryan, its religion is older than that of the so-called Aryan invasion. The god of the Rigvedic Indo-Europeans is Indra, the thunder god, who fills in later developments an entirely minor role, apparently being absorbed into the Hindu pantheon, just as the minor gods of primitive tribes have been, retaining, however, his personal identity by virtue of a social prestige or privilege which other tribal gods have lost in the process of assimilation. The historical Hindu religion first appears not in the Punjab, which must be regarded as the area most completely occupied by the Indo-European invaders, but to the east of it in the Brahmarshidesha, where stable fusion between these Indo-European invaders and the previous inhabitants probably took place. When alien cultures and religions fuse to form a new culture or religion, it will not be found that this fusion takes place where the intrusive culture is strong enough to predominate. It will rather appear, away from the centre where the intrusion is strongest, in some area where the previous culture was strong enough to resist complete suppression and make its influence felt on the new one. . . .

This appears to have been the case in India, where the important position of Shiva, Vishnu, and Kali, as compared to the unimportant one which Indra now holds, signalizes the triumph of the older gods. The religious history of pre-vedic India was probably similar and parallel to that of the eastern Mediterranean and of Asia Minor. Professor Tucci points out[9] that though the moon does not appear to have been an independent divinity, ancient lunar cults have been assimilated by Devi in the forms of Durga, Kali and Tripurasundari. The cult of snakes, and the worship of a mother goddess, were probably brought in by earlier invaders of Mediterranean or of Armenoid race, speaking no doubt a Dravidian language, whose religion must also be associated with fertility cults, phallic symbolism, the *devadasi* cult, and probably human sacrifice. Recent discoveries in Crete have revealed a remarkable snake cult associated with the symbol of the double axe. With Mesopotamia, too, we must perhaps associate a moon god and sun goddess, whose sex was changed with a change from matrilineal to patrilineal descent perhaps under the influence of the Rigvedic invaders. It is worth pointing out that the deification and worship of kings, very typical of the Hindu attitude to kingship, is stated by Langdon[10] to be characteristic of Sumerian religion in contrast to Semitic. It would also appear not characteristic of the religion of the Rigveda, but on the contrary to be con-

[9] In a note on 'Traces of Lunar Cult in India' in *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, Vol. XII (1930), fasc. IV, quoted in *The Indian Antiquary* for January 1932, p. 17.

[10] *J.R.A.S.*, 1931, p. 367.

nected with the beliefs in the external soul and in life-essence discussed below, inasmuch as the king contains or represents the life principle of the community he rules. Like the cult of the snake, the transmigration of souls too appears to be a doctrine in no way typical of northern religions, in which the dead live on underground, and Fustel de Coulanges has pointed out[11] that it is not a feature of any northern religion though it has survived and been incorporated in them from the more ancient religions of Greece and Italy. Ancestor worship again is very strong in India, and this, too, would appear foreign to northern European religion, and indeed it is almost impossible that nomads should be ancestor worshippers, and the Aryan invasion, so-called, was probably an invasion of steppe-dwelling tribes, pastoral in habit and still nomadic. Cremation they may have brought in, and if so, they gave it a social cachet which is still leading to its gradual adoption by tribes which have previously practised burial or exposure, but it seems much more likely that the Rigvedic Aryans buried their dead and adopted cremation from the inhabitants whom they conquered. . . . Khandava and the slaughter of serpents in the Mahabharata. Vishnu, apparently a post-Rigvedic god, is perhaps the fruit of the reaction of what we may call proto-Hinduism to the Rigvedic invaders, as also the present ascendancy of male over female conceptions of the deity, and Przyluski ascribes a Dravidian origin to the name 'Vishnu'.[12] At the same time Vishnu would seem to have some associations with religious beliefs which must be regarded as represented chiefly in beliefs yet surviving among primitive tribes. Indra apparently is himself declared in the Mahabharata to be guilty of brahmanicide in killing Vrtra and Namuci who were Danavas, though the Rigveda praises him for the same deed. Pargiter adduces considerable evidence to show that the true Brahman families were of pre-Rigvedic origin, and that the Aryan kings of Madhyadesha were their own priests and in the earliest times had no Brahmans. Strabo remarks that it is recorded that 'The Indians worshipped Zeus Ombrios, the river Ganges, and the indigenous gods',[13] and as Zeus Ombrios is clearly Indra, the thunder god, the suggestion that the other gods worshipped are of indigenous origin is probably very near to the truth, and the traditional view that the Hindu religion is a growth entirely subsequent to the Rigveda, or rather to the Rigvedic invasions, is no longer tenable. Rai Bahadur Ramaprasad Chanda, in a paper on the 'Non-vedic Elements in Brahmanism',[14] has made a number of points which indicate the

[11] *La Cité Antique*, pp. 7 sq.
[12] *Archiv Orientálni*, IV, p. 2 (August 1932).
[13] *'tous egchorious daimonas'*, bk. xv, p. 718.
[14] MS. (unpublished?) in the author's possession.

continued existence of the pre-Rigvedic religions alongside of or in opposition to the orthodox Hinduism of the Brahmarshidesha. . . . His general conclusion is that the cults of Vishnu, Shiva and Sakti 'originated among a people of different ethnic origins from the mid-lantic Aryans'. The point to be emphasized here is not so much Chanda's precise conclusions as the evidence he adduces of the survival of pre-vedic religion alongside and inside the later forms of Hinduism, and of their gradual absorption and acceptance as a recognized part of it, which has perhaps since developed into the position of their forming the most important part of it.

IV. Ancient Poetry

P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar, the author of *History of the Tamils from the earliest times to 600* A.D., Madras, 1929, points out certain fields in which Tamil literature and culture developed independently of Sanskritic influences. The reading is from pages 153 to 155.

Tamil life pursued the even tenor of its course for many centuries untouched by anything Sanskritic. Very few Sanskrit words found their way into early Tamil literature, for the old Tamil vocabulary was perfectly competent to express the concrete ideas which alone appealed to the Tamil genius. The bulk of the Tamil people lived their life in their own old ways without being affected by Ārya practices and Ārya theories of life. Hence there were two parallel currents of life in the Tamil country, that of the Tamils and that of the Southern Āryas, which did not mix their streams. The genius of the Tamils was utterly different from that of the Āryas. The Tamils accepted the seen world and were satisfied with the joys of of the living present. The ineffaceable sex-urge and the delirious joys of fighting, love of women and hatred of enemies, respectively called Agam and Puṛam, were enough subjects for their songs. The Āryas, especially of the age succeeding the Bhārata Armageddon, were brooding over the vanity of earthly and heavenly loves and the greater vanity of wars, the fleeting joys of love and the dead sea fruit of the delights of fighting which turns into ashes in the mouth; they were constantly devising ways of escaping from the wheel of birth and re-birth, the contemplation of whose never ceasing revolution created in their hearts vairāgya, literally, lovelessness. Hence the Sanyāsa was developed among the Vaidikas, the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Āgamikas, the Jainas and the Bauddhas, with the hope that the renunciation of the evanescent pleasures of life would lead

to the enjoyment of the eternal ānanda of immortal life unconditioned by time and space. The early Tamil poets were of the earth, earthy; they revelled in concrete images of the actualities of life as men know it: the post-Vedic Āryas were for ever forging abstract ideas which escape, like cotton wool, the grip of earthly minds, but are glorious realities only to those who have gone to the world where the sun and the moon shine not, not even the twinkling stars. The Tamil temperament was optimistic, whereas the Ārya temperament was pessimistic with regard to the seen world. The Tamils of those days were not divided into rigid castes, but the Āryas were divided into four varṇas. The conventions of early Tamil poetry were utterly different from those of Sanskrit poetry. So the bulk of the Tamil and the Southern Āryas lived their separate lives without affecting each other's culture. Much of the early Tamil poetry is lost but enough remains to prove that for some time even after the beginning of the Christian era, there was absolutely no intrusion of Sanskrit culture into the minds of Tamil poets.

V. The Marriage Ceremony

The reading is from P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar, *History of the Tamils from the earliest times to 600* A.D., Madras, 1929, pages 78 to 80.

The ancient ceremony of marriage which obtained among the Tamils before it was altered by the Aryans is described in two odes of the anthology called the Agam. Thus it is said : "There was a huge heap of rice cooked with pulse (even after many guests had been fed). On the floor of a pandal built on long rows of wooden columns was spread freshly brought sand. House lamps were lighted. The bride and the bridegroom were adorned with flower-garlands. In the beautiful morning of the day of the bent, bright moon, when the stars shed no evil influence, some women carrying pots on the head, others bearing new, broad bowls, handed them one after another while fair elderly dames were making much noise. Mothers of sons, with bellies marked with beauty-spots, wearing beautiful ornaments, poured water on the bride, so that her black hair shone bright with cool petals of flowers and rice-grains (which had been mixed with the water), and at the same time they blessed her, saying 'do not swerve from the path of chastity, be serviceable in various ways to your husband who loves you and live with him as his wife'. On the night after the marriage ceremony was over, the neighbouring ladies assembled, (dressed the bride in new clothes)

and sent her to the arms of her lover, to which she went with trepidation."[1]

It will be noticed that in this ancient Tamil rite of marriage there is absolutely nothing Aryan, no lighting of fire, no circumambulation of fire, and no priest to receive dakṣiṇā. Another ode in the same anthology refers also to the wedding-rite. "White rice, well cooked and with plenty of ghi, was served to the elders with stintless generosity. The omens shown by the birds were propitious. The broad sky shone bright. The moon was in faultless conjunction with the Rohiṇi asterism. The marriage-house was decked. They worshipped God. The big drums resounded with wedding tunes. Excited women were peeping winklessly with their flower-like eyes at the bride who had been bathed (and decorated). The image (to be worshipped) of big flower-petals, clear like a gem that has been well washed, was placed on the soft vāgai flower with the double leaf whose back-side is bright, and the aṛugai grass which grows in low land when the roaring clouds pour the first rain and which is eaten by calves. It was decked with cool, sweet flower buds and white thread, clothed with holy cloth, so as to look grand. The bride (was seated) under a pandal, on the floor of which sand was strewn, looking as if rain-drops had fallen. She was perspiring with her load of ornaments. (They fanned her) to dry the wet. Then her relatives gave her away".[2]

VI. The Gods

The following reading is from P. T. SRINIVASA AIYANGAR, *History of the Tamils from the Earliest Times to 600* A.D., Madras, 1929, pages 463 to 467.

INTO THE POEMS very slowly entered chiefly by way of allusions Northern (Āryan) ideas, concepts, beliefs and superstitions. These are found mostly in the odes composed by the latest poets. The total number of such Āryan intrusions are very few when compared with the genuine Tamil ideas, customs and beliefs. I have gathered the former together in this chapter from the Agam and the Puṛam where they are chiefly found. Śivan is referred to once in the Agam and five times in the Puṛam. One reference is to His helping the Devas to victory by shooting the three forts (of the Asuras) with a single

[1] Agam 86, 1-22.
[2] Agam 136, 2-8.

arrow, having a serpent as the bow-string and the hill as the bow, and He is described as blue-throated, wearing the crescent on his fair head and with an eye shining on his forehead.[1] The other references are only short phrases alluding to his three eyes, his matted locks, his blue throat and the crescent moon on his head.[2] One passage, in the Agam, refers to the three-eyed Śivan.[3] In one stanza of Puṟam, Śiva, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and Subrahmaṇya are described. "He who is riding on a strong bull, has matted locks blazing like fire, the invincible battle-axe, and a throat like the blue gem, and He whose body is of the colour of the chank from the sea, and who wields the death-desiring plough and has the palmyra flag, and He whose body is of the colour of the well-washed sapphire and who raises aloft to the sky the bird-flag and desires victory, and He who holds up the gem-like peacock flag, who is always victorious, rides the peacock (or the elephant) and is bright red."[4] Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are referred to in one more place, where a Śola and a Pāṇḍiya are together praised as looking like these two gods.[5] There are two other references to Kṛṣṇa, one where a Pāṇḍiya is described as full of fame, like Māyon, famous for his powers of teaching.[6] An incident in the life of Kṛṣṇa is decribed also in Puṟam. "When the terrible asuras swarmed and concealed the sun who shone in the sky and he disappeared, (men) could not see on account of darkness. To relieve the distress of the round world, the collyrium coloured one of great strength brought (the sun) back and raised (him in the sky)."[7] One stanza in Agam refers to Māl's bending the branches of the tree, that the cowherdesses may wear the cool leaves for cloth.[8] Paraśurāma is alluded to once in Agam. This will be referred to

[1] Puṟ. 55, 11. 1-5.

[2] 'He who has a head shinning with milk-like crescent moon and a throat like sapphire.' Pur. 91, 5-6.

[3] Agam. 181, 11. 15-18.

'The three-eyed Lord whom the sweet-toned four Vedas which spread good to the world (sing about), embellished beautifully the yard where the banyan tree goes.'

In Puṟ. 198, 1, 9 occurs the phrase 'the god in the banyan tree.' The commentator has interpreted this phrase as 'Viṣṇu on the banyan leaf;' I think this explanation is anachronistic, for the phrase is a common epithet only of Śivan in early Tamil literature.

[4] Puṟ. 56. 11. 1-8.

[5] Puṟ. 58. 11. 14-15.

[6] Puṟ. 57. 11. 2-3.

[7] Puṟ. 174. 11. 1-5.

[8] Agam. 59. 11. 5-6.

The original of this tale is not found in Sanskrit so far as I know and perhaps it is not an Aryan legend of Kṛṣṇa but a Tamil legend of Māyon.

In modern versions the story is somewhat altered. The ladies desire to wear their own clothes stolen by Kṛṣṇa.

latter. There is one more reference to Kṛṣṇa in Agam. "Like the garland on the wide, all-conquering breast of the wielder of the discus whose bright spokes are well-arranged, was the rain-bow." [9]

Rāma is alluded to once in Puṛam and once in Agam. In the former poem it is said that monkeys picked up Sītā's ornaments which she dropped when Rāvaṇa carried her in his aerial car, and wore them topsy-turvy.[10] In Agam, the following simile occurs. "As was silenced the banyan tree with many aerial roots (the sound of whose birds disturbed) the thoughts of victorious Rāma, near the shore of the roaring ocean at the ancient Koḍi (Dhanuṣkoḍi), which belongs to the Pāṇḍyas of the conquering spear." [11]

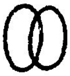
To turn from Ārya legends to Ārya beliefs which had begun to gain a foothold at last in Tamil India. The world of the Devas of the Āryas is noticed in a few passages. The Devas are "the denizens of the fair world where there are forests of gold flowers." [12] Svarga is called "the world of the Gods," "the world to which people go rarely," "the world of the high," "the world of the Gods," "the world of the superiors." [13]

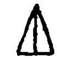
[9] Agam. 175. 11. 14-16.
[10] Puṛ. 378. 11. 18-21.
[11] Agam. 70. 11. 13-16.
"As the jewels sparkled on the red-faced relations of the monkey that saw the bright ornaments dropped on the ground by Sītā, the wife of Rāma of the strong car, when she was forcibly carried away by the powerful Rākṣasa".
This story of the silencing of the birds nesting in the banyan tree, like that of the monkeys wearing Sita's jewels topsy-turvy, is unknown to Sanskrit literature. The Paṇḍiyas are called kavuriyar perhaps because they worshipped Gauri i.e., Mināḳṣi.
[12] Puṛ. 38, 1. 12.
[13] Puṛ. 22, 1. 35; Ib. 176, 1. 20; Ib. 228, 1. 11; Ib. 229, 1. 22; Ib. 260, 1. 21.

Appendix

THE INDUS VALLEY SCRIPT

The following reproduction from the book of the late Prof. H. Heras, S.J. is of interest because of the resemblance between the Sumerian, Egyptian and Proto-Chinese symbols, and those of the Indus Valley. Pages 74 to 79 of *Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture.*

Pictographs	Remarks	Values	Meanings
	Rooms or apartments on one side of a sort of *caravansarai.* Cf. Mackay, *The Indus Civilization,* pp. 52-53.	*nālvīd*	four houses
	A space more indefinite than the limits of a house, i.e. a city and the country round a city.	*ūr*	city country
		*kalakūr*	united countries
	See representation of the sun in Babylonian sculptures.	*uyarel*	the high sun
	Cf. Egyptian hieroglyph for sun; Wallis Budge, *op. cit.*, p. CXXIV, Nos. 8 and 9.	*el*	sun
	From comparison with preceding sign.	*nila*	moon
	The path of the sun.	*elvali,* ("*the path of the sun*")	the Zodiac

Pictographs	Remarks	Values	Meanings
	Plan of a well fortified and prosperous city. Cf. Heras, "India, the Empire of the Swastika" *Bombay Coronation Memorial*, pp. 19-20.	*nalam*	prosperity
	A sprout springing out of the seed.	*puy*	to produce, spring, issue, descendants
	Cf. Capart, *Primitive Art in Egypt* pp. 118-121, figs. 90-94.	*koḍi*	flag
	A gate placed at the entrance of gardens and fields in South India to prevent cattle to enter the premises. Persons may cross over it: *Kaḍavu* in Tamiḻ, *kaḍamba* in Malayalam.	*kaḍa*	boundary, limit, end, horizon, to cross
	The central line divides the triangle into two halves.	*ari*	half, to know

There are 241 pictographs in this script.

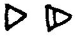
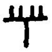
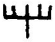
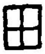
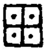
These are signs that do not represent any object in a pictographic way. Of this kind are many signs to which abstract ideas correspond, for such abstract ideas cannot be shown pictographically. Other signs that are now placed within this range were probably pictographs in more ancient times. These signs, having developed and lost their pictographic appearance, are now being classified among the phonetic signs.

These signs themselves could not help us much to know their meaning. Hence they were compared with signs of other ancient scripts in the hope that similar signs of those scripts might have the same meaning. The Iberian, Etruscan, linear Minoan, Cypriote and Phoenician could not give us any help, for all these writings are alphabetic. Moreover, some of these scripts have not yet been deciphered. Amongst the ancient scripts of old Mediterranean nations, Sumerian, Egyptian and Hittite scripts supplied us with many meanings. Another non-Mediterranean script which was of great help, was the Proto-Chinese script which has been recently discovered. The neighbourhood of India and China sufficiently explains the similarity between signs of the first scripts of these two nations.[1] Moreover two terracotta heads with evident Chinese features, which were discovered at Mohenjo-Daro, prove beyond any possibility of doubt

[1] Cf. Heras, "The Velālas of Mohenjo-Daro", p. 47.

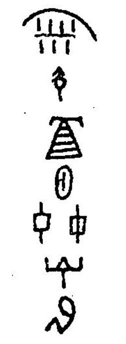
that there existed intercourse between the Chinese and the Mohenjo-Darians.[2]

Let us now examine some of these phonetic signs. In the following tables they will be grouped according to signs of ancient scripts with which they were compared:—

Sumerian Signs	Phonetic Values	Meanings	Proto-Indian Signs	Phonetic Values	Meanings
	du	to make		*kei*	to make
	nu	stone with inscription		*kal*	stone, inscribed stone
	igi	eye		*kaṇ*	eye, to see
	*gal*	great		*per*	great
	nin	lady, queen		*kopen*	queen
	*dib*	to catch, to imprison		*piḍi*	to catch, to imprison
	en	lord		*kon*	lord, king
	kur	lands		*nila*	lands
	ba	to divide		*pak*	to divide
	bar	shrine, temple		*kovil*	temple
	te	to attack, enemy		*edir*	enemy, opposite
	zi	life		*avi*	life, spirit, soul
	es	decree, sentence		*tīrpu*	decree, judgement
	tar	judge, to judge, to decide		*tīr*	judge, to judge, to decide
	ur	city		*pali*	city

A thorough comparison of the above and other Proto-Indian signs with the signs of Sumerian script has shown that the latter proceed from the former.[3]

[2] Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro,* II, pl.XXVII, Nos. 8 and 9.
[3] Cf. below, Appendix I to Chapter II.

Proto-Chinese Signs	Phonetic Values	Meanings	Proto-Indian Signs	Phonetic Values	Meanings
	yu	rain		*mala*	rain
	shih	arrow		*kaṇi*	arrow
	wang	king		*kon*	lord, king
	jih	day		*pagal*	day
	tshung	middle		*nadu*	middle
	tsi	son		*maga*	son
	yun	clouds		*mukil*	clouds

Two signs of the latter table deserve special mention. The Proto-Indian sign that reads *kon*, "king", has been compared with the Proto-Chinese sign meaning "king". Now, independently of this comparison, the sign phonetically reads *kon*, "king", as we shall see presently.

The other sign , after being compared with the two corresponding Proto-Chinese signs, was found to mean "clouds" and was consequently read *mukil*. Now, reading this sign phonetically, we have arrived at the same reading *mukil*, as we have explained elsewhere.[4]

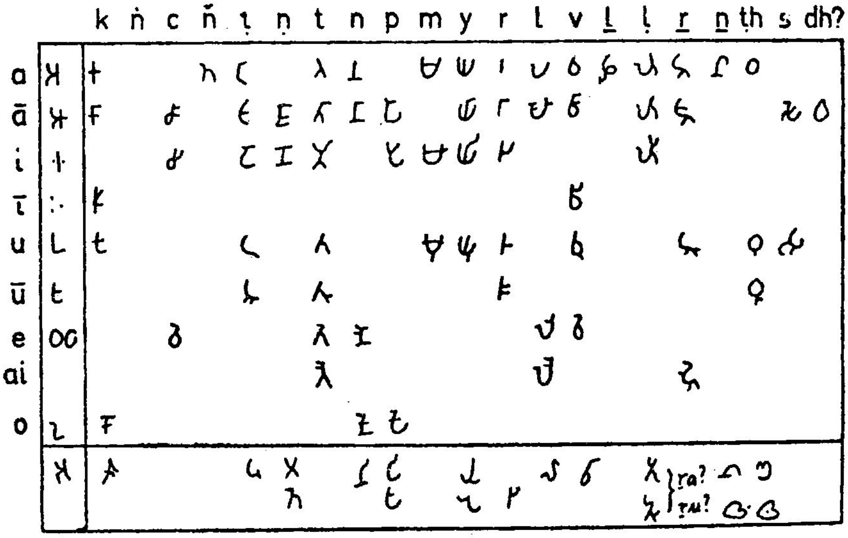
Two Proto-Indian signs have similar signs amongst the Egyptian hieroglyphs: in the Egyptian script means "to think". The same sign is found in the Mohenjo-Daro inscriptions and will consequently read *eṇ*, which means "to think", "to meditate", or "to calculate".[5] The Proto-Indian sign may very well be compared with the Egyptian meaning "life" and reading *ankh*. Hence it will read *uir*, which means life in Dravidian languages.

The Hittite script, not fully deciphered as yet, furnished us with a sign for comparison, This sign is also found in the Proto-Indian script. In the Hittite script it means "ruler" To express this idea in Dravidian, we use the word *āḷva*, which may even mean "king". Later I realized that this is a compound sign, and as such it reads *mukililmukan*, which means, "One who draws the house of

[4] Cf. Heras, "The Story of two Mohenjo-Daro Signs" pp. 1-3.

[5] This sign may have had a pictographic value of a very abstract idea. A thought is caused always by an impression or impressions from the outside world through the senses. The sign seems to present a vessel into which a rod has been introduced. If our explanation is correct, it may point out the beginning of psychological studies in the ancient world.

clouds", a bombastic title, much in agreement with Dravidian customs,[6] which befits the king of the Veḷāḷas perfectly; for these people in the historical period were called *kāràlar,* "rulers of the clouds".[7]



Earliest Samples of Tamil in Brahmi Script
(Kamil Zvelebil)

[6] Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-6. See *Job,* XXXVII, 15.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 5. Cf. Heras, "The Veḷāḷas in Mohenjo-Daro", pp. 45-55.

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Words like Aryan, Dravidian, Tamil which occur very frequently in the texts have not been included in this index.

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